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Studies in Theology.

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE SUPERNATURAL BOOK.

BY

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ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟ ΦΩΣ.



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SEARCH the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.—CHRIST.

The works which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me.—CHRIST.

God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.—PAUL.

That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon, and our hands have handled, . . . that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.—JOHN.

For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.—PETER.

P R E F A C E.

THERE is a growing impatience to-day, in some quarters, with the phrase "evidences of Christianity," and with all attempts to bring the subject within the sphere of proof. On the part of unreflecting Christians this feeling of disfavor is not uncommon, and arises generally from a confused medley of ideas and irrational prejudices, such as (*a*) a general distrust of reason in matters of faith, propagated and kept alive, no doubt, by frequent assaults of so-called reason upon the doctrines of revelation, and a blatant assumption that reason is opposed to faith. This fable, by frequent repetition, though utterly groundless and absolutely false, assumes in many minds the force of a maxim or axiom; (*b*) a feeling that Christianity needs no proof—that it is so obviously true that to call it in question is mere effrontery, deserving only contempt; (*c*) a latent feeling that resort to proof is disloyalty to faith and subversive of it; (*d*) that the believer has personal knowledge in his own experience which is final, and therefore argument is unnecessary, and hence harmful; (*e*) there are, doubtless, some of the saintliest Christians who are in utter ignorance of all proof, and who even doubt whether the Christian system is susceptible of being established by proof; (*f*) proof, which always lays a demand for laborious study and painstaking, in the case of a system of religious faith such as Christianity is lays double tax on all the powers, and this is not pleasant. Assumption is easier than argument—the acceptance of a theory than its proof. If Christianity were not called in question it might be better for such minds not to raise the question. Were it received and obeyed implicitly there would be little urgent occasion to wade through the argument. An accepted truth, when

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apprehended and held honestly and faithfully by the mind, and, if a practical truth, when obeyed, needs not that its reasons or proof should be weighed and examined in order that its chief benefits may be enjoyed. But even in such a case faith would acquire a higher value and obedience a nobler quality were they sustained and enforced by reason and a right understanding of their grounds. The same faith is more worthy when it rests on proof than when it rests either upon assumption, tradition, or heredity, though it may be as strong or even stronger in the latter case than the former, and have all the practical value of reasoned faith. The mind has more respect for itself and holds itself with nobler firmness in the former case than in the latter, though the truth be precisely the same in both cases.

The case of Christianity is now, and in fact always has been, that of a disputed system. It is accepted by only a small minority of the human race—not more than one fourth. This is not to its discredit, since it is comparatively recent in its complete expression. It has an historical basis; it propounds doctrines; it includes ethics, theoretic and practical; it is a philosophy in its theory of cause and of being; it assumes a divine origin and authority.

On all these grounds it is challenged. The position has been taken, and held with great pertinacity and show of learned argument, that as a history it is fabulous, that as a philosophy it is unsound, that as a religion it is an imposture. Doubt exists and is propagated in highest seats of learning. Honored and influential names do not simply avow suspended judgment but profess established disbelief. The attack is bold and defiant. Assumed disproof is cited and declared to be conclusive.

It is impossible, under existing circumstances, that Christians should ignore the issue without at the same time in effect confessing judgment; or by delinquency giving over the whole system to inevitable and universal rejection; or, if not that, without consigning it, in the judgment of many minds, to the limbus of an unworthy superstition, and assigning themselves to the place of dupes or knaves. The system must be shown to be worthy by being proved to be true, or its failure ceases to be uncertain.

It is easy to reply that it has stood through eighteen hundred years, though assaulted a thousand times, and there is but little danger that it will fail now. This is a common form of statement, and is as vicious as common—an idiot's fallacy. The statement, in the first part of it, is true, and that it is true is high proof—one of the evidences we have to assign; but the second part is a *non-sequitur*, and its assumption both false and dangerous. It is important that we should keep in mind why it is that Christianity stands to-day intact after so many fierce assaults and under the strain of present unprecedented attack. We are safe in saying that it is not because it has been indifferent to the demands for proof; nor because it is true and needs no support; nor because its votaries have an experience, even; nor yet even because God is in it as its founder. It may be admitted that this last reason has been potent, but it has been because God, its Founder, has furnished evidence adequate to support its claim, and because it has had vital force to raise up disciples who have been able to adduce these evidences as occasion has required, and thus to rout their adversaries. But for these reasons it would long ago have become the just scorn of mankind. God supports his revelation, not by arbitrary power, but rationally.

Three great conservative forces are discernible along the ages of Christian history, which, co-working, have preserved Christianity from becoming effete, and which are now the sources of its strength, and which must continue to be potent in all its future struggle until it wins its final victory and takes possession of its throne as the perfected universal religion of mankind. These are: (*a*) the presence of God in it, making it a power unto salvation—working regeneration in men; (*b*) the appearance from time to time of men of eminent learning and piety who have been able to discern the fables and errors which ignorance has woven about it from within, and who, by purging them away, have been able to bring forth its truth with greater clearness; and (*c*) the creation by it of a race of scholars who have been able to adduce its evidences whenever assailed from without.

It could not have survived a century but for these conjoint helpers; without an immanent God it would have perished in its

swathing bands. The absurdities and crudities of its friends would have murdered it in its youth; its enemies would have battered it down ere it reached its manhood, but that as the emergency arose the needed help was at hand. Origen called forth Clement; Pelagius created Augustine; Tetzels evoked Luther; Calvin and Augustine begot Arminius and Wesley; Channing and his more erring followers find their foil in a host of defenders of orthodoxy. Each mistake found its mentor; through clouds and storms it has made its way from the beginning, emerging from each internal convulsion and external assault into clearer light. It furnishes the most illustrious example of the survival of the fittest.

The battle over its evidences commenced with its Founder. His enemies declared him an impostor. The issue was sharp and direct then. He met the charge squarely and decisively; not by evasion or silence, but by citing the testimony of the prophets and his own miraculous works. The answer was complete. Had he not done as he did his religion would not have survived him. With the answer rendered it triumphed over fagot and frenzy, and over misrepresentation and perversion, and over distortion and misconception by its friends worse even than the malignity of its foes and the persecutions of enemies. That it survives is because its evidences were such that it was impossible to destroy it. There has been no age since when it has not been necessary to re-fight the old battle. The reason for this necessity is obvious. Infidelity is an ancient disease which re-appears each generation. Its seeds are in the sinful nature, and spring up with each new crop in new varieties—extirpated to-day here, they appear in new form to-morrow there. Porphyry and Julian, heathen and apostate, find their successors in each generation, and in each they also find their successful antagonists. Ambrose was the Blücher in the great Waterloo in the Senate house of Rome when Symmachus led the pagan legions. When atheism lifted its malignant and threatening form led on by Hobbes and his compeers, came Cudworth and other able defenders; Bolingbroke, Collins, Shaftesbury, Voltaire and their coadjutors during the prevalence of French and English deism drew forth Stillingfleet,

Leland, and Butler; Paine had his Watson; the evolutionists and pseudo-scientists, led on by Huxley and Darwin flaunting defiant banners, are met by an army of scientists not less learned than themselves, and theologians and philosophers greatly their superiors, to utilize their facts and correct their blundering conclusions. Thus the citadel of periled truth stands intact because its besiegers always find it garrisoned by defenders able to repulse their attack.

The necessity will always exist to be vigilant. Ancient and oft-repeated triumphs do not warrant present indifference. Christian armor must be kept bright, and the defenders of the faith must continue always to be ready for action, nor must they lose patience. All advance brings into the field new forces and new demands. They must be met bravely, or the cause that has hitherto sustained itself triumphantly, failing in the new emergency, will, despite repeated successes, come to final defeat. Its only hope of permanent and triumphant advance, until it has vanquished its latest adversary, is in its ability to continue to convince reason of its divine authorship and its adequacy to maintain itself intact, and at the same time harmonize its claim with all new knowledge that awakened mind may discover. It must avoid all appearance of unfriendliness to advance, and, more yet, it must be the advocate and guardian of research and progress, as it always has been, and must be ever ready to accept whatever new light is furnished, however unfriendly its seeming.

The battle to-day rages with unusual fierceness, and it is now again specifically on the question of its evidences—the question whether it is a divine system. That question, victoriously fought through in the seventeenth and early part of the eighteenth centuries, was put to comparative rest for a hundred years.

Meantime a bastard Christianity has mounted the pulpit and come to preside over the press of a portion of Christendom; calling itself by the name of practical, or, worse still, liberal, as opposed to doctrinal, Christianity. It is a taking but misleading name, and gives passport to a degenerate race of teachers and preachers. It deals out platitudes which weaken and disgrace the pulpit, set up for the proclamation and defense of truth, into a

platform for gush and the swash of sickly sentimentality, and the imbecile discussion of the taking topics of the day. The Church, fed on such innutritious fare instead of the great truths of God, is weakened, and becomes the scorn of its enemies and the camp of mere adherents, and is reduced to miserable expedients to keep itself afloat. As might be expected, all sorts of things are called Christian, and all sorts of fables compete with the counterfeit for public favor, with many times little ground for choice between them.

Is it surprising that a system so betrayed, so disgraced, so wretchedly dwarfed, finds itself assailed by fierce hate, contempt, and disfavor in an age that has outgrown such imbecility? It is always when real Christianity is corrupted that skepticism shows itself. Degeneracy begets infidelity. The assault to-day is atheistic. It attacks the foundations. It denies the whole line of Scripture truth. It substitutes human crudities for supernatural revelations. It displaces Christ for other masters. Taking the name of the Master it first begrimes him, then scourges him from the temple. The age is full of Lo here's! and lo there's! and any and every thing else than Lo! the rock against which the gates of hell cannot prevail! The assault of historical criticism, once so loud and confident, is scarcely referred to any more except by belated minds. Higher criticism, so called, has been suborned to base and hostile uses with no more successful purpose. Its assault upon Moses and Isaiah and Daniel is barren of results, or in the end serves what it has been employed to hurt.

The only force remaining in the field with show of power of resistance and attack is that of bold denial of the possibility of proof that in the Bible we have a supernatural revelation and many-times-repeated misrepresentations of its teachings. These, like all their predecessors, will soon pass like shadows over the rock. Meantime it remains that truth must be defended and its supports be kept intact. That secured there is no danger. The discussion in the following pages aims simply at a sufficiently full and fair statement of the Christian argument. It is believed that it shows an array of proof in support of the proposition "that the Bible contains a supernatural revelation," which is

absolutely unanswerable, and adequate to establish the point conclusively to fair and unprejudiced reason. In the conduct of the argument no difficulty is concealed; nothing is assumed; no point of the question is begged.

It would not be seemly to close this preface without acknowledging the freedom with which we have availed ourselves of the services of many distinguished scholars who have preceded us in the discussion, both in the body of the text and in appendix-notes, who in every case have been duly credited by name. The appendix, which embraces extensive extracts, pleads its excuse in their exceeding value. We have deemed it more just to give them in the words of the authors, and in full, than to avail ourselves of them in some modified form which would deprive the respective authors of the credit due them, and perhaps weaken the force of the arguments themselves.

No department of thought is more amply supplied with rich and repaying discussion than that of the evidences which support revelation. Nowhere has there been displayed vaster stores of learning. Nowhere has there been more painstaking candor and research. In no discussion has reason had fairer play, so far as the defenders of faith are concerned. If reason has at any time in the conduct of the ages-long debate been outraged it has been in the methods and spirit of assailants of revelation. Outside of absolute demonstration no truth has been more fully established.

The subject is at once the most important and recondite, in some of its aspects, that has ever engaged human thought; and it has employed the noblest powers of the noblest minds that have appeared in the history of the race. No subject is before the mind of the world to-day of comparable moment. It is, in fact, the question whether there is a God of infinite love, the Father of all, or not; and the equally momentous question whether or not he has ever spoken to his human children. There never was a time when Christianity had less reason to be faint-hearted, or greater reason to be confident. Victory is as certain as that God lives, and as that Jesus Christ is his Son. With these two facts underlying us, all else of final success is absolutely sure; the gates

of hell cannot prevail against the truth. There is work to be done, but it will be done. With this confidence we float our banner to the breeze. Neither foes within nor foes without disturb the repose of our faith. The fiercer the assault the sooner and more decisive the victory. The watchword for the day is, to the hosts of Israel, "Stand by your guns; no compromise; peace only on the unconditional surrender of the world to Christ." A thousand victories on a thousand fields, and not a single defeat in the ages-long conflict, prelude the certain and not far away final triumph of the great Captain of our salvation.

Vulgar and ribald assaults deserve no attention, and never should be mentioned, but every student of the question should possess himself not only of the defenses of faith, but also of all serious works from respectable scholars and thinkers who are avowedly or impliedly on the side of doubt. As far as possible, become acquainted with the facts and theories of science, and with all historical and archæological research bearing on the question. Respectable minds always deserve attention, and sincere supposed ground of dissent should in every case have respectful consideration. Loyalty to truth demands an open mind and absolute candor, and the age will tolerate nothing less.

We accept as our postulate: Any thing else than a supernatural or superhuman Christ the Son of God, and any thing else than a Bible delivered of God to men, takes all virtue out of Christianity, and convicts it of imposture. There is and can be no defense of the system that includes not a defense of these two points; the rejection of them is the rejection of Christianity; whoever assails these fundamentals, whether from within or without, is a traitor to the faith. Any style of Christianity that is indefensible on these grounds is not worth defending; and any defense of Christianity on any other ground is no defense.

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EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

THE CLAIM STATED.

THIS volume proposes to examine the evidences of Christianity. By Christianity is understood the system of religion called by that name. But inasmuch as many things are so called it may be proper to make the statement more explicit. By Christianity we do not mean any specific ceremonial system or system of rites and sacraments, or any particular Church or creed or ecclesiastical establishment. We do not mean Roman Catholicism or Protestantism, Calvinism or Arminianism, Unitarianism or Trinitarianism, or any ism. We do mean what all these respectively assume to be—the religion founded and taught by Jesus Christ. We do not in this discussion raise the question what that religion is, but this, rather: Whatever it is, does it deserve to be accepted as true? The purpose of the volume is to examine the evidence on that point, specifically and exclusively. Thus it will be seen at once that the question we consider is rather the validity of Christ's teaching than the matter of it; it is not the question of what the great Founder taught, but the evidence that what he taught is true, and is to be received not only as true, but as true because he taught it, and because of the evidence of its truth attending his teaching.

The claim set up by all evangelical Christians, of whatever phase of faith, is, that the Scriptures of the Old and New

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Testament either directly or indirectly contain his teachings; and that, in substance, they are of divine authority and are to be received as such; in other words, that the Bible is a divinely inspired book, and that he was a divinely sent teacher, and that the substance of what is found in the Bible is a revelation from God, and as such is to be accepted as final authority on all matters of which it makes deliverances. It is the evidence of the validity of this claim which we propose to examine.

Still more explicitly and fully, the claim set up is, concerning the Old Testament, that it is a book written by certain Jews at a period from four hundred to sixteen hundred years before the advent of Jesus Christ among men, and that these writings are interspersed through that period and at intervals—some earlier and some later; and that these many writers, from Moses to Malachi, were divinely taught men, called prophets, who were appointed of God for this work, and who set forth in their writings nothing but what they either personally knew to be truth, or which they received directly from God by some form of inspiration or direct divine attestation; that whatever, or the substance of whatever, is contained in the ancient documents composing the book is to be received as of divine accrediting and authority.

While the same importance is not attached to the respective books, or all the parts of any of the several documents, it is claimed for them that they are, in essential respects, a composite whole, all the parts of which are to be revered as sacred and veracious. Some parts, it is admitted, are possibly mere human recitations of known historic truths, while other parts were, it is contended, directly communicated by God himself; but all parts are important as containing holy truth respecting God's providential dealings with the world, and as setting forth his thought,

purpose, and plan in his administration of the affairs of the world ; and when most human, and least supernaturally attested, still true, and a part of divinely-authenticated truth.

The claim set forth further, with respect to Jesus Christ, is not simply that he was a divine teacher, greater than any of the prophets, but more than that : it is that he was ^{Jesus Christ a} a divine incarnation sent into the world more per- ^{divine incar-} nation. fectly to reveal God to men, and that by means of the truth he delivered and the ministry of his life and death he became the Saviour unto eternal life of all such as receive and obey him ; and that the New Testament contains a faithful and true account of his teachings and works, including a history of his life from his birth to his miraculous ascension into heaven, recited by personal observers and witnesses, and by inspired and divinely authorized disciples and apostles, and that all the contents of the several books—gospels and epistles—are in substance exact truth, accredited and authorized of God, and faithfully transmitted to us. It is specifically the evidence with respect to this claim that this treatise is designed to set forth and critically examine.

Before entering upon the examination it may be well to state more clearly still what is not included in the claim. It is not in the claim that every word or statement in the sacred books of either Testament is divinely inspired, or even divinely authorized, or certainly true. Some have injudiciously assumed this ; but it is not so pretended by the wisest and most reliable defenders of Christianity. It is admitted that, while the contents of the sacred books are substantially authentic and accurate, in the ages of transmission and in transcriptions and translations into other languages some inaccuracies and mistakes may have occurred ; but it is maintained that no such case has been established as to impair the substantial

accuracy of the record, or in any degree diminish its credibility and authority in matters of doctrine or history.

It is not in the claim that any human creeds, or individual interpretations, or deliverances of councils, are infallible exponents of Christianity, or *en bloc* certainly true; No human decrees accounted infallible. nor for the vindication of the faith is it required to defend either the spirit or practices of the so-called Christian Church in whole or in part, either apostolic or post-apostolic, or in the older or newer sects. It is admitted that the Church has never been faultless, and that only a few individuals in any age or sect have merited canonization, and that ages have succeeded ages in which the Church *en masse* has fallen into gross corruptions both of spirit and practice. The apostasies and corruptions of the Church are easily explained, but do not enter at all into the point whose proof we are interested to examine — that is, whether or not the Bible is a revelation, or contains a true history of some of God's dealings with men, and truths and doctrines communicated by him through chosen and supernaturally inspired men, and through a divine incarnation in the person of Jesus Christ. The so-called Christian Church does not enter at all into the issue. It is not proposed to consider what it is, or whether it has any claim to infallibility, or even to the esteem and respect of men. So far as the present discussion is concerned it is no more involved than any pagan system. An attack upon the Church in no way touches the thesis we discuss, and a defense of the Church is not involved in a defense of the thesis. Hence that whole subject is ignored as irrelevant.

It is worth while to say, yet further, that the claim set up is not simply that the Bible is in the main true; nor yet that its teachings are in the main flawlessly correct; nor that Jesus was a flawless character and a teacher of pre-eminent worthiness; nor that the holy books contain even a flawlessly

sound ethical system. The claim is all this, but it is also more; namely, that the teachings are the teachings of divinely commissioned men, and of a divine incarnation sent into the world to deliver them, and that they are therefore of supreme, universal, and perpetual authority.

This is the thesis to be proved. The evidence to pass under review is the evidence which is alleged to support the thesis. Evidence bearing on any other point, whatever it may prove, is irrelevant and inconsequent to the present discussion; and objections or reasonings or criticisms touching any other aspect of Christianity will elicit no attention, as in no way affecting the only matter under consideration.

There are certain implications and presuppositions which are the necessary complement of any proof of Christianity, but which this discussion cannot undertake to verify. They constitute distinct theses which must be separately supported, but which here are assumed as admitted; and which, if disputed or questioned, find their appropriate consideration in specific discussions. They could not be introduced here without unduly enlarging this treatise. Such as, for instance, the being of God; the existence of a moral universe; the fact of moral law, of human accountability, of immortality, and other matters involved in what is called the religion of nature, but which are also essential facts and constituent elements of Christianity. The truth of all these is essential to the truth of Christianity, and their falsity, if proved, would utterly disprove the system and invalidate any and all evidence alleged in its support; but they are not the matters in hand, and in a treatise on the evidences of Christianity can only come into view when an attempt is made to falsify them, and so to falsify the system of which they are inclusions.

In order to establish the thesis propounded, certain things

must enter directly into the proof, and no evidence is competent which does not include them. It must appear that the books are genuine; that they are authentic—that is, that they are not fictions, but true and veritable histories; that they are credible—that is, that there are no facts which convict them of error or imposture; and that, added to all these, portions of the contents were supernatural communications—deliverances of God himself, and not merely of men.

Any evidence that would invalidate any of these facts would put in jeopardy the whole volume, and would be absolutely fatal to so much of the contents as come under the invalidation. The truth of the entire contents must be sustained, or, at least, be invincible to the charge of error or falsehood. Nothing short of this will meet the demand of the claim. Possible exceptions which might be traceable to the accidents of transmission, transcription, translation, or even intent to corrupt or modify, but which do not affect the sense or substance of the documents, may be admitted without infringing the rule. Anonymity does not in all cases necessarily destroy authenticity, which is the essential thing.

But even if these points were thoroughly established they do not fully meet all the demands of the claim, and of themselves would leave the evidence incomplete and inadequate. The authentic history must include facts which require supernatural agency before the claim is fully established, and this must appear in evidence; for the claim is not simply that the documents are genuine and the facts recited veracious, but more than that: that God is himself immediate source in some parts, and either the immediate witness in all, or is throughout the indorser or authenticator of the substance of what is given, so that the book is a supernatural book and the evidence rendered is divine. It is requisite that it should appear that God is himself witness and source of the documentary state-

ment. This evidence wanting, there might be proof of the truth of the content but there would be no proof of its source and authority, which is the most essential part of the matter at issue.

It must be obvious that it is not sufficient, indeed, it falls entirely below adequate evidence of the matter to be proved, even though we should make it to appear that Christianity is the truest philosophy ever invented Things inadequate as proof. or discovered; that it reaches the highest ranges of thought; that it exerts the most beneficent influence ever exerted by any system; that its Founder was the noblest type of manhood—ideal in perfection; and that its disciples and those who come under its influence, and in proportion as it fashions them, reach the greatest excellence of character and condition of welfare. These are generally acknowledged facts, and they are to be accounted for; but though as facts they undoubtedly make for the probable truth of the thesis, and therefore are proper matters of consideration and of high evidential value, yet they do not directly affirm or establish the truth of the claim. The system might be the best existing, even the best possible, in all these respects, and yet not be thereby proved to be a divinely revealed system—might simply be the most consummate flower of human production. That it is any thing more would still remain to be proved. But in the proportion in which it in these respects transcends all other merely human products, and approaches what superhuman wisdom would make it, and especially if it reaches a perfection in depth and range which seems impossible to unaided human intelligence, these facts, being established, would so strongly point to a probably superhuman and supernatural origin that, while they might fall below absolute proof, they would be of the nature of evidence; and being precisely such facts as would be expected to attend a divine revelation

they would be of great weight. Were the thesis true, these facts would exist as necessary concomitants and inclusions of it, and might hardly be supposed to exist except on that ground; so that their existence makes for the thesis. The objector, if not convinced by them, must render to himself and to others some rational account of them on other grounds. It is true that the critical doubter might content himself with simply asserting that, whatever value they have, they fall short of making out the case and therefore count for nothing, since insufficient evidence is no evidence. The affirmant must produce adequate evidence. The doubter may simply reject on the grounds of inadequacy. And this is precisely the position held to-day by many rejecters of Christianity; and also by many who call themselves Christians but who deny all the supernaturalism of the system. They are full of compliment—not the most devout and loyal believer more so; Christ has no more admiring eulogists; they even call him divine; they profess to accept him as an inspired teacher. (Of course they attach poetic meanings to these terms.) They give him a flawless character; they admit the Bible to the highest rank of books—the deepest philosophy, the profoundest ethics, the loftiest rhetoric. They allow that the Bible is the most beneficent agency among men; that it has done more to elevate mankind than all other agencies combined; that the world needs it still to guide its ever-advancing and growing civilization; but they contend that, with all this, it is yet only a human product—the highest flight of genius, the effluence of rapt enthusiasm—so far as appears from evidence. All this is beautiful; no wonder that it deceives many; but it falls entirely below the demands of the thesis. It is incidental to the claim, and a necessary concomitant of the adequate evidence, that these things should be so; but they are not the evidence which is required to make good the claim set up.

Once more. The claim set forth by Christianity, which the evidence must sustain, is not only that it is a revelation given from God, or in whole a teaching sanctioned by him and so made final and supreme in all matters of which it treats, but still more: that it is sole and sufficient. It excludes all other systems. It claims the right to sole occupancy of the world. It claims that it will supplant and destroy all colliding systems; that it must dominate. This does not mean that there is no truth in matters of faith outside of the Christian revelation. It is admitted that some degree of truth is found in all systems. Mind nowhere exists without the dim perception of some truth; but there is no system except Christianity that is not crowded with fatal error; none, therefore, that will not ultimately be abandoned as false and worthless. Christianity the only system of ethics free from error, and perpetual. The final religion, as to its doctrines, practices, ends and effects, is the system contained in the Bible and revealed supernaturally to men. The advance of science and growth of human knowledge already foredoom all others, and leave them behind, while they only lead into the deeper knowledge which it reveals. The world is now so known over all its surface and throughout all its history that it is conceded that Christianity is the only system that can carry over into the future. The truth is with it: or it has not existed, and does now nowhere exist among men.

It will not satisfy the claim set up, either, that the system should be accepted as proximately true, so as to go into the future with main substance; it must go intact, and with power Christianity not simple proximately true. to maintain its influence as a body of thought; it must be regnant as a revelation. It must be supreme, and its dictum must dominate mind in all stages of advancement. It will admit of no modification, will make no surrenders, will permit no compromises. All growths of knowledge must accord with it and work into it. It must never be convicted

of error. It must stand all tests and come forth absolutely unimpaired, or it must go down with the common rubbish.

Finally, if the evidence fails to support this claim Christianity ceases to have any right to exist or be tolerated by men.

Christianity if It is what it claims, or not only is it not revelation,
false has no claim. no divine system, but it convicts itself of being

a detestable fraud, and as such must be denounced and abolished. If it is not a revelation it is a purely human product. There is no middle ground. If it is purely human it is a fraud: its prophets were impostors, its history is a tissue of lies, its Christ was an ignominious pretender and deceiver and deserved to die as a malefactor, or is a myth; its doctrines are fancies and fable, and the whole structure of worship that has grown around the Crucified is a base and worthless superstition. It is a vain and foolish thing to indulge in compliments. Either Christianity has for its foundation a Bible given of God and a solid system of verities and doctrines divinely revealed to men, or its teachings are baseless and its practices groundless and blasphemous. There may be such occasional truths found in its ancient books as deserve to be perpetuated, just as in the case of any of the poets and philosophers, ancient or modern; but the system itself is an impertinence, a fraud which has gained currency by cunning and chicanery during ages of ignorance, unless it is all that it claims to be. There is otherwise nothing whatever in its high pretensions, or in any of its special doctrines or practices, which has any other right to live than that of any other superstition.

The nature of the case required that the revelation should be in a progressive method. Time was needed. The first age was not prepared for it. A prepared people was necessary for its reception, and preservation, and transmission, and final focalization. There must be a twilight before the morning, there

must be a sun for the day. What we claim for the sacred books, then, is not that there is no truth outside of them; but that, whatever of truth is elsewhere, they contain the uncorrupted truth, the authoritative truth, the unadulterated truth, the collected truth, the full and complete truth, the truth which has on it the seal of God. We concede that no land is without some scattered rays, shining from the sun—that some even have considerable brightness; but we claim that the concentrated light which is to illumine the world, which will continue to shine with ever-growing splendor when all other lights shall be lost in its brightness, is the holy volume of the Old and New Testaments. In it are the attested and authoritative inspirations of the early ages, which were preparatory, and which were the appropriate and necessary harbingers of the fullness of time; and in it are the final and full revelations of Him who spoke from heaven. We claim for it that, as compared with any and all other systems, it is that which dispenses with them; “when the perfect is come, that which is in part is done away.” It is to judge all others, relegating the pseud and imperfect to oblivion. It is not one among many that shall remain, but it is the one and only whose life is eternal and whose empire is to be universal. It is essential to this claim that, in addition to the prophecies which proclaim its divinity and the miracles which authenticate its doctrines and give impressive sanction to its entire contents, it should be able to show that it is light, and that there is in it no darkness at all—that it is truth and life. But we do not claim for it that as yet its perfect effulgence appears. It is the sun, but it is the sun in clouds, draped and enfolded in mists of error and preconceptions and misinterpretation. The obscurity and haze of uncertainty are not in itself, but in the murky atmosphere through which its beams are struggling. These it will chase away and dissipate by its brightness, and its unobstructed shining will bring a cloudless day around the entire globe.

We do not claim that any Church or any mind has yet appeared who sees it in its pure, clear light, or whose rendering of it is accurate. We do not believe there has. The spiritual eyes are yet to be opened that shall see its unspotted light. It must itself create the eye that shall be able to gaze on its undimmed glory; and that is not the work of one day or one generation, but of ages. It is advancing. Men complain of sects and of controversies. As well complain of the many-flagged battalions of the conquering army. No single battalion wins the field. On what principle could we have uniformity? No greater calamity could befall the race, at present, than uniformity. That will come when full-orbed truth wins. The winning must be brought about by collision and amid confusion. Let Romanist and Protestant, Calvinist and Arminian, Rationalist and Literalist, Ritualist and Puritan, Scientist and Supernaturalist, Unitarian and Trinitarian, all work—it is not without reason. They work because the sky hangs with clouds; they work because the sun shines above the clouds; they work toward the sun. After awhile, when they rise to the same heights, one ocean of light shall sphere them all, and the clouds of difference will have flown away forever. When that day comes our dim tapers will all have been extinguished, and we shall rejoice that our raveling of the beam was not accepted—that the disquieting and disquieted combatants did not make peace on our terms. Let the glorious strife go on!

But while we admit the fact that theology is a progressive science, we must not therefore conclude that nothing is deter-
Theology not yet a conclusive science. minable in it, nor yet that we have no fixed conclusions in it. All that the fact warrants is, that much of our interpretations remains *in dubio*. This, in fairness, must be admitted. In a subject of such infinite profounds and immeasurable and far-reaching extents, both in time and space, it is certainly not over-modest to allow that we have not

been able as yet to take every sounding, or make an exact chart of every bearing. It may be profitable for us to remember occasionally that, to begin with, our knowledge was zero and our faculty but little better, while our ignorance was infinite—as infinite as truth of which we knew nothing. If we add, that experience must have taught us that the conversion of ignorance into knowledge is neither an easy nor rapid process, nor unattended with grievous mistakes and blunders, it will require but little humility to educe the confession that the unknown and falsely conceived still open a wide field for the industrious use of our faculties. In the interpretation of the two great books from the same Author which furnish the text of our study—nature and the word—it can scarcely be just matter of surprise that we have already found out many, and corrected a few, mistakes made in the first and even second readings. It is more than probable we shall find still many others. Many of our current renderings probably will not abide; and it may be, of these, not a few of which we have made great account. Our ignorance still plays a vastly more conspicuous part than our knowledge, and it is safe to expect we shall in the future relinquish much yet held; nor will this embarrassment to advance soon end.

We shall go on making mistakes, contending for them, and afterward giving them up; first denouncing, then thanking, those who require the surrender. It is a long, hard road, and the summit is afar. The creed of a thousand years away will differ from the creed of to-day. Let us thank God for it, while we contend for what we think truth now. Nature is not less true, not less glorious, because it differs from our reading. When we find that we were mistaken we do not find it less good; the new discovery has not made us poorer. So with the blessed word—our mistakes and blunders about it do not diminish its worth when these are corrected. It is the gold, not the

errors with which we have encrusted it that has value. When these errors are dug away let us rejoice, though for the present, if need be, we suffer pain.

If we have been guilty of the folly of claiming for our ignorance the infallibility which we claim for our Scriptures, we would better cease that, for even revelation will be unequal to the task of supporting such a burden. There have been, and are now, creed dogmas that a voice from heaven could not afford to authorize, and which we are absolutely certain no voice from heaven ever did authorize.

It may be well for us, further, to avoid the error of putting too much even on revelation. The true student of nature does not forget that his field of observation is but a small part of the actually existing realm of being. He cannot extend his researches beyond his field, or make his conclusions broader than his premises. The student of the Bible should be equally modest. It is *our* revelation. It is for us. We are children. It mainly concerns itself about our affairs. Let us not assume to interpret the infinite by our primer. It is given for our help to-day—for the ages of this earthly stage. While it may remain final for all mundane spiritual teaching, lifting the race higher and higher as its wondrous truths become more and more unfolded, may it not be that far-off future ages in our history, as we advance to higher stages and new conditions of being, may furnish us new and higher discoveries in matters now but dimly intimated; the new and greater birth illuminating the obscurely hinted of the old, and unfolding original and at present undreamed-of facts and principles illustrative of the divine character and plan? Is it unreasonable to suppose that spirits who have entered and passed through their decillionth centennial will have higher and truer views of infinite truth

than infants of a hundred, or thousand, or ten thousand years of earthly growth? And must we suppose that those larger experiences and grander faculties and ampler opportunities will continue to give forth no grander lessons than come to us in the primary school of our earthly being? Or may we not rather suppose that we shall marvel, in those far-off ages, when we stand on higher Alps of faculty, and survey vaster fields of data, at the crudeness of our thoughts and manifold absurdities of our earthly life? Surely it must be so; but it will not prove that here and now we made no progress and gained no substantial truth, but only that we made mistakes, and were baffled by obscurity in our progress; facts which mark the beginnings of all growth in knowledge and truth.

There can be no doubt, we think, that we impose too much upon revelation — assume too much for it, demand that it shall be and do more than it was designed to do. Its simple function is to reveal God as an infinite Father to his children, and make known his purposes of love to them and their duty to him. It does not propose to be exhaustive or final. It gives a profitable lesson to meet present need. The universe is great and eternity is long, and that spirits that remain young after millions of years' research in his ways will know more and have grander revelations than are needed by us, or furnished to us, must be a reasonable conclusion. Nor is it less reasonable to suppose that coming generations of brothers who come into the inheritance of our labors with the results of all preceding research, will be able to correct many of our immature and unfounded judgments. That new learning in all departments will bring new helps, and better training will bring broader and stronger pinions of faculty, the effect of real and substantial advance, cannot be doubted. That there has been regular development from age to age we know. Christian history is a

Danger of our
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history of magnificent progress in Christian thought. Not an element of the faith has escaped the renewing touch. Why should the glorious renovation cease now? If we have outgrown the fables of the Middle Ages—and who doubts it?—without impairing the value of the holy text-book, why shall not unborn scholars outgrow ours in the same manner, not simply without impairing the holy teaching, but also enriching and aggrandizing its claim?

But while it may be conceded that as yet we have not been able to unravel the holy light, the claim we set up for the Bible requires that it should be light, and that in *it* should be no darkness at all. All the proofs we have adduced are insufficient if this crowning proof be not also given.

In considering the question, Is this most extraordinary claim here set up true or credible? there are some preliminary matters which ought first to engage our attention. Some further preliminary matters. No serious mind coming fresh to the question could propose to decide it at sight. It is too profound a matter to be so disposed of. The mind demands breathing time. It must look around and adjust itself; must take the dimensions of the question; must gauge its bearings and take in the measure of its importance and far-reaching consequences, before it can fairly give itself to the proper examination of the subject. The same necessity exists for a fair and thorough examination though we may have been familiar with the subject from childhood, and may have rested either in an inherited acceptance or an unreasoned rejection, as the case may be.

To a proper discussion of the subject it is absolutely indispensable that the mind should feel that it is one of transcendent importance. If it be true, it is that. If it be not true, it is no less important that that be determined. No proper action of the mind can be secured with regard to it in the absence of

a conviction of this state of facts; that is, that in every view of the case it is matter of the greatest moment that the decision finally arrived at should be correct. The examination demands absolute honesty and unflagging earnestness.

What is the right method of procedure with regard to this claim—that is, in determining its validity? In ordinary cases, the answer would be, Ascertain the evidence and test its quality. So we proceed in every other case. Right method. Is there any reason why we should adopt a different method in this case? or why we should be less rigorous and exacting? Do the sacredness and greatness of the claim work an exception? It would appear sometimes that this is assumed, from the hesitation and shrinking which we feel when tests are severely applied. But in fact ought not these very considerations—the sacredness and transcendence of the claim—furnish the best reason for the most searching scrutiny? Surely nothing here ought to be assumed or permitted to pass without proof.

The book is here. Millions accept it. It is known to have had an illustrious history. It is potent with the most advanced nations. It has undoubtedly made them what they are; at least this is claimed with apparent reason. The most scholarly, enlightened, and sincere men are found among its most reverent and earnest students and defenders. Some doubt. The number of dissentients increases with advancing science. Doubt assumes the aggressive — is active and belligerent. These are facts of to-day.

While it is true that Christianity was never more powerful than it is at this moment, and also that it is now doing its best work and winning its greatest victories, though often represented as having reached decrepitude and rapidly declining, it is also true that it never was so violently opposed and its assailants never so confident of success. Shall the dissent be disregarded? To many

Christianity
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that appears to be the wisest course. They would advise that we give no heed, not so much as a mention, to the opposition. Vain conceit. It is impossible. If possible, it were neither wise nor right. The conquest of the world is to be won neither by assumption nor arrogance; nor yet by blind and unquestioning faith; but by reasoned and vindicated truth.

Before taking up the question direct, and adducing the scheme of proof, it may be wise to remove one or two impediments out of the way which, remaining unnoticed, might embarrass the proper effect of the argument.

The first impediment to which we call attention is, the assumption, which is frequently made with great assurance, that the thing claimed, that is, that the Bible is a supernatural revelation, is itself wholly incredible, if not absolutely impossible.

Objections to
the claims of
Christianity
stated.

On what ground is it incredible, or so violently improbable as to evoke a judgment in advance? or as to place the mind in such an attitude of unfriendliness to the claims set up as to prejudice a fair examination?

The claim, plain and simple, is, that God has communicated with his human children. Why not? If we are not permitted to assume without examination that he certainly has so communicated, and if we cannot be required so to believe without proof, can we rationally decide, in the absence of proof, that he has not? What is the ground of denial? Is it that the thing is impossible? This has been assumed, but can any one suggest the proof of it? I know of none. I am not able to find in any book of doubt any semblance of proof in support of the allegation. It certainly is not *prima facie*. It is the furthest possible from a necessary truth. No one can pretend that it is an intuition. All analogies and *prima facie* grounds point in the opposite direction. If there be a personal God—a being

who has intelligence, who is the maker of the universe, who created man with his faculties of knowledge, making it possible for him to receive impressions and ideas from things and objects about him, and by direct communications from other minds, on what ground can it be pretended that God is powerless himself to make direct approaches to him? Is not the assumption, on the very face of it, preposterous? The Maker of the world unable to communicate with the mind he has created! Unable to cause the mind to know that it is He who communicates! Unable, however he might desire, however important to his own plan, to the accomplishment of his highest purpose, it might be, to impart a thought of his directly to the consciousness of his noblest creature! Surely no mind can be so besotted as to be imposed upon by so arrant an absurdity. The atheist who denies God might so affirm; but the theist who acknowledges him as the author of mind cannot be guilty of so great a folly, if not demented or so bound up in predeterminations as to obscure his reason. If there be a God who has founded nature and established its laws, there certainly can be nothing to hinder him from adding this one thing more to his wonderful work; certainly a much less thing than that which has been already done. It surely is not as great a work to communicate with mind as it is to create mind—to employ symbols as it is to impart the power to invent and interpret them. Nothing but a blind prejudice can give color to the supposition that divine communication is impossible. Of course, if there can be evidence adduced of the fact, that closes the argument; but the mind ought not to be required to come to the examination with the idea, in the absence of all proof, that the thing is impossible, and with the *prima facie* grounds favoring the opposite.

That God has ideas, plans, knowledges, purposes, only the atheist calls in question, and his absurdity is treated in

A revelation
possible.

another place, not here. All theists believe that the universe is plethoric of God's thought. Science is busy in the pursuit and interpretation of it. It finds every atom and fiber of creation steeped with law, which signifies simply divine thought and purpose. This only the fool doubts. Has God exhausted all possible methods of making known all his thought in this scheme of things? The idea is preposterous, and the slightest study of the scheme itself shows that there are departments where what is known hints—nay, points unmistakably—to parts of the plan which are past finding out without further and superadded helps.

The evidence is that some things, and the most important of all, are not spoken to the reason in nature. Is the maker unable in any way to supplement the inadequacy? Can he speak in nature and not speak in consciousness? May he not even use nature itself to authenticate a deeper speech than nature is designed to give? Before any weight can rationally be attached to the idea that a revelation of thoughts not voiced by nature is impossible, it is a reasonable demand that some proof should be assigned for the bold and extraordinary assumption.

Now, whether any further communication may rationally be expected, or may be believed to have been made, depends not upon the question of possibility, therefore, for that cannot be disputed, but upon the other question, Are there adequate reasons for believing that further communication is needed to harmonize and fill out the implications of what is known, and are there facts which prove that such communication has been made?

The possibility of a revelation being indisputable, it may legitimately become a question, Are there grounds
 A revelation
 probable. for believing that such a revelation would probably
 be made? And that question ought to be considered before

the question of fact is raised, in order that the mind be put into a fair condition for the examination of the evidence bearing on it; since a strong persuasion against the probability would so prejudice the mind against the claim as to hinder a fair examination of proof.

Now, whether such a revelation is probable or not can only be known by attending to the character of God and the needs of man, as the former is discovered in the existence and on-going of nature and in human history, laws, and processes discernible in the constitution of things, and in the constitution and moral history of man, and as the latter are observed and known by consciousness and universal experience.

The probability of what God would do in a given case must primarily be determined by what we know of him. What we know of him is what we have learned of him in the nature and constitution of the universe. How we may infer what God would do. These are his expression, and are exponential of himself and his character, and indicate what we may reasonably infer he would do; or, in the case of a claim set up that he has done a certain thing, or will under certain conditions do or act in a certain way, these things that we know of him furnish the grounds of a reasonable judgment as to the truth of the claim set up.

Human need comes into the ground on which probability of his action may be inferred, only as we have reason to suppose that the fact of the need would in some degree affect his action.

The argument from need is of no avail unless it be clearly apparent that there are grounds for the strong belief that there is something in the character of God which makes it rationally certain that he would be disposed to satisfy the need which himself had created; that becoming apparent, it would render the probability of his action to meet the need exactly proportioned to the need or to the interest to be subserved.

It may be doubted whether there are any *à priori* grounds on which the mind can determine either the existence or the character of God. He becomes known to us, both as to existence and character, *à posteriori*. His works and operation declare him; and on the basis of these and the intuitions which spring from our acquaintance with them, arises the whole structure of our knowledge or rational inference with respect to him.

Now, what do common observation and scientific investigation alike disclose to us on the point in question, The law of need and supply. that is, the point of the law of need and supply? Is it not a fact, that throughout all nature, wherever a need is discovered, a provision to meet it is near at hand and never wanting? Atomize the whole creation, especially the whole realm of vital existence, is an exception found? The Creator of need has universally created the supply: for the eye, light; for the stomach, food; for the lungs, air; for the papillary nerves, flavors; for all the living things, a habitat and environments adapted and adjusted; for the mind, truth; for the heart, love; for taste and imagination, beauty. Invariably a capacity or need of any kind is declarative of a suitable provision for its gratification.

Is it not then discovered to be a law to which there is no exception, that the divine will always acts according to the need which He has created? Is not this law sufficiently invariable to create a reasonable ground for the inference that his character is such that we may expect where there is a need there will be a supply?

This is the principle on which we proceed. Is the principle vicious? Or is there any reason to suppose that this case is an exception to the law? Why shall this be an exception?

Is not a need a good and sufficient reason? Especially is not a great need, which Himself has created, a *prima facie*

reason? Still more, since we find that it is according to a universal habit which we detect pervasive of all existence and history, that the smallest need is provided for, does it not become morally certain that this highest need of all cannot be an exception?

Whether he will communicate, then, turns upon the question whether there is any need that he should. If the need exists, not only are the probabilities all in favor of it and not against it, but the probability, according to all analogies, passes into certainty. The argument augments its force when we consider the nature of the need in the light of our responsibility, and the consequences of the course which we may pursue.

Is there such a need? Can we doubt it?

Allow that all nature is full of God—that he is the light of our reason, the life of our conscience, that every external object declares him, that every internal consciousness proclaims him, that we behold and feel his power, moment by moment, yet, does this prove that there is nothing more to be desired? Would it not help if we could discover some things with greater clearness and fullness? His power and majesty we see. There is no need here, perhaps. But can we say that this is sufficient to meet our wants? Is there not a sense of insufficiency, an insatiable craving in our souls to know more of him than his power and majesty? Are there not dark points which we need to have cleared up? which our highest welfare requires should be cleared up? Have we all the light and support and comfort our circumstances require? Would not our happiness be increased, and our welfare in all respects be augmented, if we could know that he thinks of us, pities us, loves us, and is conducting us? Would it not help us if he should tell us that he has a father's heart: that we may trust him, that we may pray to him, that

Teachings of
nature inadequate.

he will never leave nor forsake us—that even our sins he will forgive? Is there no need that down here, amid our sorrows and griefs and despairs and guilt and forebodings, he should speak a single word of encouragement and hope? In a word, is it a fact that nature is a sufficiency for us? Do we find in ourselves and in earthly things all that our nature demands? Does it seem to be fitting that he who created us and placed us here should know of our struggle with doubt and uncertainty and loneliness through the long years, and never speak a word of relief or give us a look of tender recognition? Most of all, if this life is to be followed by a conscious eternity, which shall take its complexion from our deeds here, could he, being what he is, leave us uninformed? The thought is dreadful. Surely there is reason to suppose he would in some way hold out signals to us.

Still further: in view of our bereavements and the darkness which invests the tomb, do we need no light concerning our dead? Is it like a God to leave us in hopelessness? Does he know human grief, and has he no word to offer? Would he desert us and leave us thus? Is there an immortality, and would he not tell us of it? Or, if there is not, would he have permitted us to hope and yet leave us in uncertainty? Surely these things are incredible. Sometime, somehow, somewhere he must send messages.

If it were necessary to argue a point so obvious as our need of help, we should find abundant elements of proof in the sad condition of nations all along the ages who have been without the benefit of revelation; in the obscurity which hangs over moral questions under the mere light of nature; in the fact that on some points, and those the most important of all to fallen beings, nature furnishes no light whatever; in the universal consciousness of need; in the manifold advantages which Christianity actually brings to those who possess it; in the

indisputable fact that with an open Bible nature itself becomes a different book ; in the certainty that we do come into closer communion with and deeper knowledge of God in proportion as we are familiar with his written word : but there is no need for the argument. There is not a man living, who knows himself, that does not feel the want. In proportion as the inner life is deep and earnest do the great moral problems press us ; and each renewed struggle brings a more and more profound consciousness of the obscurity in which mere nature leaves us. *There is need.* There is not a single mind on earth, and never has been, that has not felt it. The conditions for the solution of the moral problem do not exist apart from some superadded communication from God. There is nothing of which we feel more certain than this.

When there is such manifest need we have found that there is *prima facie* probability that it will be supplied in a system where need and supply are uniform. If the eye implies light, the lungs air, and the stomach food, and the existence of the one insures the other, the same rule applies in this case with equal force. That the supply is supernatural does not diminish its probability. The provisions of nature, to begin with, were all supernatural. God is the author of them. The natural system is but a uniform method of divine operation. Along certain lines nature is nothing apart from the supernatural. The agent is the same in both cases, that is, in the established order called nature and in any departure from that order called the supernatural. The difference is but a difference of method arising from difference in subject. The administration of government over moral beings, in the nature of the case, must differ from that over things. States find it necessary to supplement nature in governing man in matters of conduct. The divine government is but an all-inclusive state of which He is the sovereign. When he governs things he

governs by the laws of things; that is, the laws of a superimposed necessity. Not so when he governs persons. Here, as there, there must be law and administration, but the methods will differ as the subjects differ. The underlying principle is, that wherever he creates a need he will suitably provide a supply. When he created persons, that is, free powers, he created the need of a knowledge of himself — need of a knowledge of his will as to what their free actions should be. He cannot fail to provide for the want. Since he has not incorporated the provision in the constitution of the being itself, the supply must be supplemented and must come from himself. The probability of an immediate announcement of law to a free mind is in every respect as great as the creation of light for the eye, or air for the lungs, or any of the provisions for the ordinary ongoing of things. If not found to be corporate with creation itself, as we have seen it certainly is not, it must be by extra-natural communication. If in the case of sinless beings the law for their government might be supposed to lie within the consciousness of the subject, or to spring directly on occasion of its use, this is certainly not so with respect to fallen beings, for two reasons: first, their fall weakens and perverts their power of moral perception; second, introduces new and exceptional wants.

These new conditions, creating new needs, intensify the demand for superadded helps. Sinless beings might be able to find the law of duty, and might have clear light on moral principles possibly in a sufficient degree without superadded helps: it is by no means certain that even such would not have needed higher revelations. Sinful beings certainly would come into immediate need of some new light as to how they might escape from the perils of their situation. The presence of sin is a fact. Its guilt produces death; this also is a fact. The soul perishes under its blight. It separates from God. The soul knows its guilt.

Nature suggests no remedy. How to obtain pardon does not appear. The history of man shows that, left to himself, as a fallen being he can find no clear idea of God—no clear idea of salvation from sin. He is compelled to have ideas. The obscurity engenders superstitions. The superstitions engender fear and despair. The grim religions of heathenism are the inevitable outgrowth. Man left to himself is too weak to rise up under the superincumbent mass of ignorance, guilt, and fear. His superstitions destroy him. There is no deliverance except by a revelation of the true character of God, and of the way of escape from the guilt and power of sin. The most gifted and highly favored are no exception. No nation of men—it is safe to say no individual man—not the Plato or Socrates of the most enlightened ages, has been able to attain to a sufficient knowledge of these great questions without help.

Even after revelation has been given, and in the very centers where its greatest light has shone for ages, the men who have grown up to the highest stature of knowledge under it cannot then dispense with it and escape toppling over into the deepest and most destructive errors. Even after enjoying it and learning its lessons the world cannot do without it. Its temporary obscuration would bring deep spiritual eclipse: its withdrawal would plunge the nations into ancient night. All known facts of history and all human experience of the laws and tendencies of man are in proof of these things. They cannot be denied. We not only need to have truths revealed, but the revelation must be preserved and kept intact, or our plunge is inevitable and immediate. Men can neither gain nor hold needed truths without the help of revelation.

But even if it had been possible for a few of the more gifted sons of genius to rise above the horizon of mystery and obscurity into a tolerably clear light, what about the million who

have no such power to grapple with the dark problems? Would not their need be urgent?

The demands made upon time and energy for the procurement of the merest necessities for subsistence are such as have in all ages prevented the masses, if they had been capable, from carrying forward researches into the obscure problems which emerge in the ethical and spiritual realms. How could they manage to get any distinct ideas or to avoid great errors? The experience of the ages and the race the earth over furnishes the answer. The thing is impossible. Nothing is plainer than the deep, universal, and perpetual need of revelation to a moral being such as man. It is doubtful if without supernatural aid he could ever have attained to any proximate conceptions of the deepest truths. It is doubtful if the greatest intellects could have attained to such knowledges as would have been available to relieve the masses, or even themselves, from degrading and depressing superstitions. The problems lie too remote, and in obscurity too deep, for unaided reason to bring them light. Even when revelation has poured its light upon them, the most profound minds, when favored with the highest advantages, find the remaining obscurity such as to baffle all their skill.

It is matter of great doubt whether, if now the Bible were in some unimaginable way withdrawn from the world, or if its authority were shaken so as to bring it into universal discredit, the race could, with all its learning in the direction of moral and spiritual truth, retain for a series of ages a true knowledge of divine things. Gradually, or more probably in a brief period, the light would disappear and universal darkness set in as deep and dense as has always shrouded heathen mind. A revealed and permanently revealing God is the necessity of man. The sun must continue to shine. No substituted light can make the day. So God must continue to irradiate our hearts and

homes by his perpetuated revelation, or a night which no arts of human devising can dispel will settle down upon humanity. The need of something more than sinful man can of himself find out is as clear as any truth can be.

It remains that we inquire: *Has the need been supplied?* This is a question of fact and not of speculation, and as such it is to be supported by evidence adequate to establish facts.

Christianity answers the question affirmatively, and puts forward its Bible as the revelation. Its affirmation is in two parts: the Bible is a revelation of God concerning himself, and it is precisely the revelation man needs, providing perfectly for all his spiritual wants. This is the claim set up. This is the claim the evidence of which we propose to adduce and examine.

Christianity affirms a revelation.

It is not necessary to the establishment of this double-faceted claim that the defenders of it should undertake to prove or arrogate to it that the Bible monopolizes all religious truth, or even all supernatural revelations of truth. Indeed, this is explicitly denied.

Religion and some religious truths, as we have already affirmed, are as universal as man. Something of God is everywhere known, and has been through all time. There is a light that lighteneth every man that cometh into the world. It is a divine light shining inwardly in the very temple of the soul, and radiating outwardly from the orderly system of nature. No nation or people or single soul of man has been without some faint reflection of it. But the fact of a revelation super-added to this implies that whatever of truth is derivable from natural sources, and whatever may be found apart from revelation, however derived, is inadequate to the needs of the race.*

*For fuller discussion of this subject let the reader see Leland's "Divine Revelation."

How far some stray beams of the ancient and true revelation have been diffused we have no means of knowing. Giving due weight to the universal religious instinct, the light of nature, and the possibility of special communication of religious truth as media of knowledge to all nations and ages, and not depreciating any light that may be shining anywhere, we claim for the Bible that it is pre-eminently a revelation—that for fullness and completeness and authentication it has no rival.

The world's mind is now known. Intercommunication is complete. The entire substance of human knowledge and thought is freed, so that we can compare and appreciate the whole. It is confessedly, among civilized men, a discovered and established fact that as source of knowledge of divine things the Bible is without a competitor among religious systems. With regular and resistless stages it is conquering, and taking the place of every other system. It must increase, they must decrease. There is not a single religion of the world the form of which advancing knowledge will not vacate, unless it be the system which has its fulcrum in the Bible. The religious principle itself is ineradicable so long as human nature remains; but there is a contest, progressing with the steady relentlessness of fate, which is to ultimately determine what form of religion shall survive and be perpetual.

The near future will leave but two combatants in the field. There are really but two to-day. There is not vitality enough in any others to inspire a struggle. The championship hangs in the balance between the Bible and a return to Natural Religion. All other extant systems are alike in a moribund condition. This is so of the great religions of the East, which even while dying hold sway over more than half the race. Buddhism and Mohammedanism alike, despite their prevalence, are decadent and passing away, and have no chance to survive as civilization advances. The Bible, with science, is to lead forward the race; or

science, championing natural religion, without the Bible, is to possess the world. Non-religion is impossible. As the classic mythologies of Greece and Rome have vanished before the Bible, so the more ancient and compact systems of Oriental religions are now vanishing. There is nothing more inevitable in the book of fate than their ultimate dissolution. Christianity has been the mighty slayer. Her Bible has furnished the caissons of destruction. But one born of her own loins now joins in deadly combat against her. It remains to be seen whether she will be able to keep the field she has won, or in turn shall vanish away. If her walls prove weak they will crumble. Will the Bible become an obsolete book?

Non - religion
impossible.

There is one ground of assurance that it will be victor. It has met and vanquished many subtle and great foes. Its armor is not untried. Its walls have been many times beleaguered. Imagined weak places in its lines have been assaulted time and again. For centuries the battle has raged. Victory has sometimes seemed to waver; but, in the end, in broken remnants its enemies have been compelled to retire, leaving it in undisputed possession of the field. There is no breach in its walls yet. Will the on-coming host, advancing so gallantly, with improved weapons, be more successful? Time will prove. Meantime its conquering battle-cry is the same which has rung down the centuries, "*The word of God*"—a *revelation* and an *inspiration*.

Christianity
will be victor.

There are reasons why natural religion must fail in the contest. Nature teaches a religion, but her teachings are not adequate to the demand. Her lessons are not equal to the need, and her methods are too obscure. There are elements in the problem which her facts do not touch. She is the witnessing helper, but can never be the competing rival of revelation.

God reveals himself in nature. It is his product. It discloses his existence, his power, his wisdom, his eternity. He reveals himself in history as providence. He is immanent in human affairs. His hand is often manifest showing that he is a God of righteousness. He lifts up and casts down nations and individuals; he reveals himself in human consciousness; he speaks in conscience and reason; he reveals himself in his Church, "walking amidst the golden candlesticks;" he answers the cry of the contrite, he comforts saints, he terrifies the ungodly. Nature, history, consciousness, experience are full of divine manifestations; sometimes, and to some, bright; many times, and to many, obscure. He more fully, adequately, and especially reveals himself in his word. What he does not make known elsewhere he makes plain here. Nothing is left in obscurity that needs to be, or could be, made plain. He employs human language in its simple forms, condescends to our infirmity and weakness, and gives "precept upon precept and line upon line."

The revelation embraces all that is of practical moment concerning himself and his relations to us. It makes known his feeling and the principles of his action. It is a revelation touching ourselves. It gives an account of our origin, of our nature, of our rank among created beings. It explains how we became degenerate and sinful. It unfolds the scheme of our redemption. It clearly enunciates the law under which we exist, pointing out all duty. It discovers the way of salvation from sin. It discloses the fact of our immortality. It reveals the destiny of souls after death. There is nothing of importance affecting our welfare that it does not clearly express. It does not clear up all questions, but it does supply all necessary information on matters of duty and conduct.

It is by inspiration. The instruments employed are chiefly

men of like passions with ourselves, and the Son of man. The Old Testament was delivered by a line of holy men — the prophets, who were divinely moved. “Holy men The Bible in-
spired. spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” They were chosen amanuenses of God. Their qualification was not genius—not human faculty. God spoke by them. The New Testament, in substance, was delivered by the Son of God, who was an incarnation of God, and by chosen disciples who were first instructed by himself and afterward inspired by the Holy Ghost to commit to writing his deliverances and their own. This is the claim.*

We are now prepared to consider the question: Have we a supernatural revelation? and the first proof we have to allege in support of the proposition that we have such a revelation, and that the Bible of the Old and New Testaments Character of
the book. contains it, is the book itself. It is here. It must be accounted for. No other account of its origin comes to us. This is more important than at first seems. It has descended the ages bearing this character. It was originally proclaimed as such. Those to whom it was at first delivered, having knowledge of its sources and of the historic facts connected with its origin, and of the holy men who communicated it, accepted it and revered it in this character. For thirty centuries its older parts, and for eighteen centuries its newer, have maintained this rank. It has been challenged but never disproved. Millions of the wisest and best of the race have died in the faith of it. The belief of it has been the most potent agency in the progress of the race in all the elements of welfare; and is yet the most powerful factor in conserving the peace and directing the advance of mankind. A large part of the literature of the Christian world recognizes it. Governments,

* See Shedd's "Dogmatic Theology on Revelation and Inspiration," pp. 62-110, and also Appendix, Note A.

constitutions, and laws are built on it. Faith in this truth is the foundation of the social structure of all highly civilized nations—is the sap of liberty, brotherhood, and universal education. No question has been so searchingly investigated century after century by the best genius and learning; statesmen, philosophers, scientists of all schools, as well as theologians, each in his department bringing every new knowledge and discovery to aid his criticism, have contributed to the examination; all history has been explored; monuments have been interrogated, ancient coins have been gathered, the structure of language, implements, arts—in a word, all things that could by possibility throw light on the subject have been laid under tribute, and nothing has been found to discredit the claim. No man is able to say, from any information existing, that it is not a divine book. That it has so long borne this character, and been able to maintain it under such searching criticism, and the unquestioned fact that it has so contributed to all human welfare, constitute no mean proof of its claim. These are facts which it would be difficult to explain on any other hypothesis.

There is yet one other view, simply of the book itself, that has bearing on the question: If it be not a divine book, its teachings are pure fiction; in fact, it is a fabric of lies. We have, then, the problem to solve how such a fiction got afloat, acquired such power, and how such a tissue of falsehood became the most potent agency for good that has existed in the world. This the denial must explain. If a mere emanation from the human intellect, it can have no pre-eminence over the intellect of mankind. By mere intellectual growth it ought, in that case, to be susceptible of correction, improvement, and enlargement. No reason can be shown why the fractional intellect of

any age or ages, especially ages in the crude conditions of the remote past, and among a people not distinguished for power of intellection or for special facilities of spiritual knowledge in themselves alone considered, should be able to reach a height of knowledge which should dominate after ages of greater opportunities. Human knowledge in every department is progressive. This is an observed and universally admitted fact. It results from the nature of mind itself, and the circumstances under which it exists. Nothing could be more absurd, therefore, than to suppose that this one case is an exception; that here, in this most difficult realm, mind should be able to evolve, *per saltum*, in its very infancy, a system so complete and perfect that it should have absolute authority over all after ages of research and investigation, and be unsusceptible of improvement. To acquire such perfection, under such or any circumstances, it must have a superhuman origin. And of such an origin there can, in fact, be no better proof adduced than the fact that it is unsusceptible of improvement by man. Let that be established, and its non-human origin is *demonstrated*.

It claims for itself a superhuman origin, and on this rests its demand for complete authority in matters of which it treats. It asserts that it is not man-born, but God-given. THE BIBLE claims super-human origin. This assertion is no proof, but the book itself is proof. It is a *revelation*, and *therefore* an authority. It sets up no claim on any other ground. It is not a human philosophy or discovery. What is the proof alleged in support of this claim?

Before examining the proof we may remark briefly, further, these things on the general character of the book: Characteristics of the Bible.
a. It is an ancient book. Parts of it descend to us from a more remote antiquity than that of any other writing

extant—nearly a thousand years earlier than the most ancient fragment of Greek learning; more than that: before any of the Latin and most of the Greek classics had existence. We ask special attention to this fact. *b.* It is of Hebrew origin, and furnishes the only account of the early history of the human race. *c.* It is a composite volume, comprising the writings of many different minds interspersed over a period of more than fifteen hundred years. *d.* It is a perfect unity, the parts having such relations that obliteration of any considerable part would mar the symmetry of the whole. *e.* It covers the entire period, in unbroken continuity, from the dawn of creation to the incarnation of the Son of God, furnishing a complete outline of the plan and procedure of God in the creation and government of the world. *f.* More than any thing else it is a development of the thought, feeling, purpose, and action of God in connection with human history from the beginning, historically given. *g.* Though largely secular and employed about affairs, it is pervasively sacred, and in its deepest significance has constant reference to the supersensible world. Its most human parts are divine. Its conspicuous characters and events are introduced only as they serve and illustrate some divine truth, or as they enter into the great spiritual movement progressing in the world. So soon as we enter its portals we find ourselves in a temple. The cloud of incense fills the entire building. The spiritual always pervades and transcends the temporal. Whatever the scene, whether of war or peace, domestic felicity or public calamity, one Presence is never left out. Throughout the whole, giving sacredness to every part, the great Infinite himself, and the august, unseen spiritual realm, with the matchless verities which lie concealed therein, touch us on every side. We are lifted out of earth and time, and unconsciously rising above its tumult find ourselves surrounded and affected by

invisible and eternal realities. Whatever else it may be, in this sense the Bible is God's book as no other book ever was. He is the mighty Presence which fills all its courts and corridors. His name perfumes every page. As we enter, it is as if we ascended through the unsoiled ether into the presence-chamber of the Most High. From its mount of vision a new universe rises about us: *earthly* grossness and sensuality melt away into a *celestial* and unfading paradise; on its historic mountains we walk and talk with God; its Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and an innumerable company from every land and nation, as we gaze, change their earthly robes and put on the vestments of immortal beauty. Time's troubled history ends, and we are in the serene of a painless and deathless life. The old and temporary vanishes away, and new beings and new glories crowd our vision. It does not seem like a dream of fancy.

No other book affects us so. In some mysterious way it opens a great door into unseen realities. Like as the telescope discovers hidden stars, and brings them out from abysses where only empty space reveals itself to our unaided vision and lays them under our gaze in their bright reality, so its stronger lens penetrates the invisible and brings forth to our open gaze the principalities and powers of the heavenly places, and we behold them and seem to hear the rapture of their song. It lifts the veil of death, and we behold immortal realities through its dim but illumined portals. It breaks the charm of things visible and temporal, and ravishes us with the vision of things invisible and eternal. The universe it opens to us becomes more real and transcendently more glorious than this in which we live and move. It makes us willing—nay, eager—to renounce this that we may enter upon the more attractive glories of that; it transforms hardships and trials into joys, for the sake of those glories in reservation. There must be some reason for

this strange power of the book, so unlike all other books that we have known.

If it is God's book, all is plain. It would serve this very end. It would fill the very place among books which it seems to fill. No human treatise could affect us so. Were it a fiction, it might excite the imagination and move the sympathies, and even momentarily enrapture the affections; but no fiction permanently transforms the life, or can. It is the prerogative of the true and the real only to sway, with absolute control, ages and generations of men. These alone elevate and aggrandize human existence. The mysterious power of the book proclaims its unique origin.

Certain conditions are indispensable to the possibility of its claims. *a.* The substance of it must be true. If a divine deliverance, its historical statements must be veracious, its doctrinal contents sound, and its ethical teachings correct. Falsity in any part will be fatal to the whole, or so far vitiate its claim as to destroy its authority: *falsus in uno falsus in omnibus*. Severe as the test is, its high assumption demands it. "God is a God of truth." *b.* Its contents must be important. The Infinite could not make a deliverance of insignificant truth with the formality and circumstance of a special revelation. Nothing but matter of high import could furnish the occasion for extraordinary interference. *c.* It must propose an end which could not be reached by ordinary methods. He will do nothing which is not needed. A special revelation must have behind it a special necessity. This does not imply that many of its truths might not be known without special help, but that essential parts could not. Given the mind and the system of the universe, it might discover some parts of his way. Revelation is required for the knowledge of other parts, and were it not of such use and need

it would not be resorted to. *d.* Its deliverance must be in a manner and through a medium worthy and suitable. He will not degrade or dishonor himself in the means and instruments he employs. They will be such as will comport with the holiness and dignity of his character. This does not imply that mean and contemptible things may not be used, but that when employed it will be subordinately. All things serve him; nevertheless his ministers to whom he communicates his secrets, and who become media of communication to others, are angels and men. *e.* It will not be uncertain whether he has spoken or not. He will attest his word. These things we feel certain must concur in any revelation which God might deem best to make to his human children. Wanting these, the revelation would defeat its own end by making it impossible that it should be received or respected by those to whom it is communicated. Authentication is as necessary as revelation. The proof must be complete, and must lie within the reach of the honest mind. Despite all possible proof some may doubt, but God will not be wanting in his part.

There are certain things also which cannot be required of the revelation. *a.* It has a definite sphere and function. It cannot be required to go beyond that. It is not Things not required of a revelation. a work on physics in any branch. It is not even a work on psychology or philosophy or ethics. It recognizes nature and mind and morals, and propounds certain things concerning each, but proposes no scientific deliverance, sets forth no theory, depends upon no theory. Its allusions are in the common language of the popular thought. Beyond the fact that God is the author of nature by a *de facto* creative act, and the correlate fact that he conserves it, reigns in and over it, imposing its laws and conducting its movements and determining its bounds, it neither affirms nor

teaches any thing. It leaves the mind free to pursue its own investigations and reach its own conclusions as to his methods in the physical realm, and as to all mere natural facts and laws. No findings of science that leave to him the glory of authorship and supremacy in the universe can conflict with it, for this is the extent of its relations to the natural system. It is no reflection on it, but rather its glory, when science detects what it calls natural law reigning throughout the system over each minutest atom. Every discovery of that kind is within the predicate that he made it in wisdom. *b.* So likewise of the mind or spirit—the whole intellectual and moral realm—it proposes no scientific theory. It recognizes the soul, declares God to be its author, and announces its responsibility. It leaves mind free to investigate its own laws, to learn its own nature, to discover the relations and modes of action of its own faculties. It affirms spirituality and accountability. *c.* It is a revelation exclusively of the nature and character of God, and his spiritual relations to men, embracing a statement of facts and historic events connected with the revelation itself. It is responsible for the veracity of the facts, and the truth of the doctrines as originally delivered.

The proof necessary to support it is precisely the kind of proof which establishes facts and doctrines of belief or faith.

Kind of proof required. It must be apparent that the facts alleged are facts, and that they are of such a kind as to show the hand of God; and that the doctrines are such in kind as a revelation might be supposed to contain; and that the source is divine, that is, that God is sponsor for them, or direct and original revealer of them. These things being shown, the proof is complete; is such as the nature of the subject requires; such as to leave the unprejudiced mind without ground of rational doubt.

It is not necessary to suppose all the parts of revelation of equal value, but all the parts must be true, and must in some way serve the revelation. The revelation is contained in the word. The historic parts of the Old Testament and the New serve in many instances as a setting for the diamond. They are simple narrations of events, parts of which may have no moral significance and require no special divine agency; are in no proper sense of the word matter of divine revelation; might have been written of mere human motion, yet serve to show some act of God which is of great moral significance, and which, apart from the historical narrative, would not appear. God is revealed in the history, and so the history in its minutest detail becomes important.

But that which is important is the part which God acts. He may speak in an act; the history of the act would then become the medium of revelation as really as a verbal communication would. We may not, there-fore, dispense with any part of the book, but we may discriminate as to the relative value of the parts. No one imagines that the statement of the manner in which the Israelites encamped about the base of Sinai and the regulations of the camp are of comparable significance, or, in the same sense, a revelation, with the commandments which were enunciated there amid thunder and flame and voices, and which were afterward written on two tables; but all must feel that the entire account serves the revelation. Whether Christ sat or stood on the Mount of Beatitudes might not be matter of importance, or a revelation in the same sense in which the beatitudes themselves are; yet the fact that he sat is an historical part of the manner of the deliverance. In both cases, and in all similar cases, there is part of the narrative which any human witness could write or relate without any special help, but there is an inspired part which God only could give. This is the con-

All the book
of value, but
not of equal
value.

tained revelation. A little reflection will show that while none of the mere drapery is essential, all the parts of the framework are useful and helpful; and it may well be doubted whether the simple revealed matter of the Bible could have been delivered without the apparently purely human part. It requires the whole story of Jewish history to develop to us what God makes known of himself therein. We must have the entire account of the Christ-life in detail from the announcement to the Virgin to his ascension from Olivet, as well as his own words and acts, to get the divine contents.

What we claim for the book is, that it is a true history from beginning to end, in which God is made known to us, and in which he makes known to us by word and deed matters of importance with respect to himself and with respect to ourselves.

The book itself, as containing a revelation, is more important than its history. If divine, it ought to contain internal evidence of the fact. A book that God *would* make ought to differ from any book that man *could* make. It should proclaim its divine authorship in some sort, as nature proclaims its divine authorship. Does the Bible stand this test? A fair examination of this point demands that we should recur to its human authors, the time and circumstances of its origin, and also the matters of which it treats, as well as its contents. In some parts it is the most ancient book of which we have any knowledge. There is no room to doubt that it dates back to the time of Moses—at least fourteen hundred years before the Christian era, six hundred years before the foundation of Rome; as long as that before Homer, the most ancient Greek writer, as a wandering minstrel sung his “Siege of Troy” to his countrymen; when Egypt was in its vigorous youth, and before the long-since-extinct

Assyrian empire had attained its zenith; perhaps while the pyramids of the valleys of the Nile were being built, and long anterior to the birth of philosophy; at a time when the human mind was in its infancy; when language itself was in the first stages of its growth; before the birth of art, except in architecture; before any knowledge of science, except some crude essays at astronomy; before mind had been educated to reasoning, and when practical arts were in their crude beginnings; when men lived in tents and were mostly without fixed habitations; before the existence of the Roman world, and when the known bounds of human habitations comprised a small part of middle Asia and a speck of Africa; before navigation, or agriculture, or commerce began to exist; three thousand years before the art of printing was discovered.

These predications are of the most ancient part of the volume. David sung his divine songs nearly two hundred years before the time of Homer, and more than six hundred before Virgil wrote the *Æneid*. Isaiah published his matchless prose six hundred years before Cicero pronounced his classic orations, and more than three hundred before Socrates uttered his philosophy in the Academy and groves of Athens. The canon of the Old Testament was completed four hundred years before the Augustan age of Roman learning.

Fairness to the argument also requires that it should be borne in mind that the book was in whole written by Jews. A nation just emerging from slavery when the volume opens, and never distinguished for learning or Writers Jews. mental greatness; from whom anciently descends not a single fragment of thought of any kind not contained in this book; a nation without arts, without philosophy, without poetry, without schools; who come down to us in this single product of their inspired genius. It is also to be remembered that it is the product of many different minds, in brief tractates,

separated by hundreds of years and written by men in different conditions of culture.

To these considerations must be added the subjects of which it treats—subjects the most occult and inaccessible—
 Subjects treat- such as a cosmogony, the being and perfections
 ed of. of God, the law of God, the existence of the spir-
 itual world, the coming of a better age, the laws of human
 duty, and all those occult matters which tax mind to its ut-
 most. *Prima facie*, we should say that a book written at
 such a time, by such men, on such themes, would be worth-
 less and false. Not a single fragment worthy of preservation
 reaches us from those ages, or the classic ages hundreds of years
 later, either from the Greek or Roman mind, on kindred
 subjects. Every thing was steeped in fable for a thousand years
 later. But this book comes down over the centuries in its un-
 broken integrity. Time, that has retired every thing of merely
 human origin, makes no impression on it. The discoveries of
 science, instead of growing from it but grow into it. The
 cosmogony of Moses, on a fair interpretation, is the cosmogony
 of science to-day. Its law is still ideal law for the nations.
 Its narrative is the sole fountain of all ethnology and root his-
 tory of the various races on the globe. It has not been possible
 to convict it of a single falsehood or error. The monuments of
 Assyria and Egypt bear witness to its faithfulness and marvels.
 It is still the most potent book on earth.

The question has been asked, Were the God of heaven about to give a book to the world for the illustration of his character and law and his providential dealings with men, in what particular, probably, could he change this volume? and it is confessedly difficult, even with all the light of two thousand years of progress since its final utterance, to indicate a single particular which might be left out or changed with advantage.

We would not dare to obliterate its account of creation, nor could we, in the slightest particular, amend it. There is not a fact of geology that contradicts or extends it, though we are glad to say that science has helped us to a better understanding of its great teachings. We could not erase its account of the flood, or the re-peopling of the globe, or the distribution of the root stocks of its nations, for against that there is no proof, and both ancient traditions and well-sustained history lend it their support. We could not add or diminish any thing about its story of Nineveh, Babylon, or Egypt. Neither the sand-mounds on the banks of the Euphrates nor the canals or pyramids of Egypt improve or contradict its statements, while recent researches confirm them in detail and with singular minuteness.

If we turn to its ethical teaching, not an idea or principle has been added or eliminated to this day. There is not a vice that it does not condemn, not a virtue that it does not inculcate. Were a senate of the wisest men now living convened to prepare a code for mankind, they could not include a principle not found in this revered book, nor could they exclude one which it contains. It still leads the wisest legislators and statesmen. The learned ages have not produced a single book on ethics, theoretic or practical, that has outlived the generation that produced it, or that has noticeably affected the habits of mankind, while this book has defied all change, even to a *jot or tittle*, and has won and yet holds the governing place over all enlightened people, and controls all legislation and government, to a greater or less extent. Its dictum is law. Its decisions are irreversible. Its principles are adapted to all times and conditions. It is impossible to see any particular in which a perfect administration of the universe would modify it in order to improve the welfare of the race.

The book has marked peculiarities. Not unfrequently a mere fragment contains a wealth which would richly freight an entire volume. It furnishes the actual portrait of a real person and life which it is confessed no human pen has ever been able to rival when at liberty to draw an ideal. It incarnates an excellence which fancy in its loftiest flight cannot imitate. There is not a want of man that it does not provide for. Its counsel is the directest path to all temporal and eternal good. If every other book that was ever written were destroyed, it alone would contain every essential thing for the temporal and eternal welfare of the races, so far as ethics is concerned. Were it embraced and its principles practiced universally, it would convert the earth into a paradise. Evil would substantially disappear from among men, and peace and abundance and universal comfort would bless the human race. Lust and avarice and war would cease, and philanthropy and industry and piety would fill all homes and gladden all races.

It lays its seat in the heart. It makes the tree good. It gives love the highest place: supreme love to God and universal love to men. It purifies the motives, cleanses the fountains of thought, and demands purity of the desires. It invests all life with sacredness, throws sanctity around the home, protects property and character, and guards the rights of the defenseless and stranger. It provides tenderness for childhood, compassion for weakness, care for the indigent and suffering. It honors labor, removes abjectness from poverty, opens asylums for the destitute. It solaces the sad, comforts the sick, and consoles the dying. It rebukes all wrong, even in the thought and imagination, condemns all impurity, forbids cruelty and oppression. It inclines with tenderness and mercy to the erring and sinful, and inspires sacrifice and labor for the recovery

Peculiarities of
the book.

A book of the
heart.

of the downfallen and wretched. It brings a compassionate God to every household, and gives a loving heavenly Father to every child of man. It furnishes a sacrifice for every sin, and supplies a Redeemer for every soul. It makes an altar of prayer in every place, and opens an ear of pity to every condition. It carries life up into eternity and promises immortal felicity to every honest seeker of its bliss. There is no sorrow that it will not heal, no misfortune that it will not remove. The most exalted and noble character is that which models after its ideal. Every thing beautiful in art, fragrant in spirit, helpful in action, transfiguring in knowledge, tender in ministries, exalting in influence, grows from its root. It gives justice to law, integrity to government, honesty to commerce, dignity to labor, gentleness to power, considerateness to superiority, and modesty to knowledge. It has a single objective end, to which all its inspiration and requirements tend with the steadiness of the needle to the pole—the universal advancement of man, as man, in all the conditions of highest welfare. No subtlety of genius is able to detect a single device or requirement in it, from beginning to end, which if carried out would not conduct to that end. There is not, and never has been on earth, any other book that has contained such qualities.

It is a tree of life in the desert world. This is another of its peculiarities. It is not a dead treatise or collection of lifeless annals. It brings life into the soul. "It is spirit and it is life." Its verities seize hold of us as if a living person held us in his grip. It moves us, inspires us, grapples with us, lifts us, transfigures us, urges us. It is a power on earth. It turns and overturns. God moves in it. The world can no more escape its power than it can release itself from gravitation. Its influence comes up into all our homes and pervades our civilization. It is in the air. Its shadowy form stands in the senate, in the court, in the conclaves of kings.

A life-giving
book.

There are no great debates in which it does not hold the balance. It takes its place in the laboratory as much as in the cloister. It presides over the telescope and microscope, the granite quarry and the laboratory, no less than over the altar and pulpit, converting all the results of human inquiry to the service of its ends. It was a semi-infidel who said:

“This collection of books has taken hold of the world as no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this book, from a nation despised alike in ancient and modern times. It is read in all the ten thousand pulpits of our land. In all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up week by week. The sun never sets on its glowing page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar and colors the talk of the street. It enters men’s closets, and mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. The Bible tends men in sickness when the fever of the world is on them. The aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath. The mariner escaping from shipwreck seizes it the first of his treasures, and keeps it sacred to God. It blesses us when we are born, gives names to half of Christendom, rejoices with us, has sympathy for our mourning, tempers our grief to finer issues. It is the better part of our sermons. It lifts man above himself. Our best of uttered prayers are in its storied speech, wherewith our fathers and the patriarchs prayed. The timid man about to awake from his dream of life looks through the glass of Scripture and his eyes grow bright; he does not fear to stand alone, to tread the way unknown and distant, to take the death-angel by the hand and bid farewell to wife and babes and home. Men rest on this their dearest hopes. It tells them of God and of his blessed Son, of earthly duties and heavenly rest. Foolish men find in it the source of

Plato's wisdom, of the science of Newton, and the art of Raphael.

"Now for such effects there must be an adequate cause. It is no light thing to hold with an electric chain a thousand hearts through but an hour, beating and bounding with such fiery speed; what is it then to hold the Christian world, and that for centuries? Are men fed with chaff and husks? The authors who are reckoned great, whose articulate breath now sways the nation's mind, will soon pass away, giving place to other great men for a season, who in their time shall follow them to eminence and then to oblivion. Some thousand famous writers come up in this century to be forgotten in the next. But the 'silver cord' of the Bible 'is not loosed, nor its golden bowl broken,' as time chronicles histories of centuries passed by. Fire acts as a refiner of metals; the dross is piled in forgotten heaps, but the pure gold is reserved for use, and is current a thousand years hence as well as to-day. It is only real merit that can long pass for such; tinsel will rust in the storms of life; false weights are soon detected then. It is only a heart that can speak to a heart, a mind to a mind, a soul to a soul, wisdom to the wise, and religion to the pious. There must, then, be in the Bible mind, heart, soul, wisdom and religion; were it otherwise how could millions find it their lawyer, friend, and prophet? Some of the greatest of human institutions seem built on the Bible; such things do not stand on chaff, but on mountains of rock. What is the secret cause of this wise and deep influence? It must be found in the Bible itself, and must be adequate to the effect." *

To the character of the book must be added the character and professions of the writers. From Moses to John there is abundant evidence that they were men distinguished for great personal worth. It is not pre-

Character of
the writers.

* See Parker's "Discourse of Religion," pp. 302, 303.

tended that they were without blemishes, but they were characterized by probity and piety. Their lives were devoted to the moral improvement of mankind. Unmistakably they had a deep sense of God, and many of them not only made sacrifices but endured great hardships, even unto death, for the sake of the truth which they promulgated. On what ground is it to be explained that they professed to receive these revelations, if it is certain they did not? How can the two things be reconciled? And whence did they derive them, if not from God? It must be explained how the most absolute deceivers could be the greatest moral reformers; how they could produce the most wonderful book that ever was written; how they could succeed in propagating the fraud; how out of their willful injustice should come so great a good to mankind. The list includes the most immaculate and wonderful character of Jesus of Nazareth, who must be acknowledged to be what he claimed to be or be put at the head of the list as the most disingenuous and unmitigated deceiver of them all.

Let us not lose sight of the real question at issue. Either these men were divinely empowered, and the marvelous book is of God, or it is a baseless fiction. If it is not of God, they were deceivers, and the verdict of all the ages must be revoked concerning them, and especially concerning Him in whom the fraud culminates. The character of the most matchless loveliness must become thus the most revolting on record. He who has confessedly given the greatest good to the world has been its most fatal deceiver. But how can all these impossible things co-exist—a faultless book emanate from the remotest age; a book that has been able to maintain its reputation against all criticism as divine; a book which the severest scrutiny has not been able to convict of error of statement, fallacy of doctrine, or fault of ethics; a

Bible false, if
not inspired.

book that has done more and is yet doing more to elevate the race than all other agencies combined; a book delivered by the best and truest men and reformers, judged by their lives, that ever lived; who seemed to have no other motive than to bless mankind, and thereto labored and suffered incalculable hardships, even to martyrdom in every form of torture, professing themselves to the last to be commissioned of God to do this work, yet a book that is an utter fraud and fiction, having no foundation of fact—a tissue of preposterous fabrications: the inventors themselves, while giving the most heroic proof of ingenuousness and honesty and disinterestedness, a conclave of knaves and deceivers! The hypothesis is incredible—impossible—yet this must be believed on any theory which denies that the sacred books are a supernatural revelation. There is no middle ground. The books are a web of falsehood and no such facts ever existed, and the hero of the story and his followers and worshipers were conspirators and knaves, or the story is true and the holy book is what it claims to be. If we allow the claim set up all is plain and simple—precisely as it should be; nothing is unexplained; the most ancient book would be the greatest and best; its doctrines and ethics would be perfect; it would be impossible to impair its validity or supplant it by any advances of knowledge; it would be a blessing to the ages; its hero and its prophets and apostles would be as here presented; it would deserve to be received as a revelation: every thing harmonizes with the theory. Deny the claim, and we see what perplexities, and difficulties, and absurdities follow. Thus the book becomes a witness to its own claim.*

But this proof, convincing as it is, is as nothing compared with others which we now introduce. The Bible claims to be a divine book, supernaturally delivered from God. We claim

* See Barnes "On the Evidences of Christianity," pp. 238-271.

this for it. Much as its character must have to do with this claim, and significant as is the proof derived from this source, we recognize the fact that it must be supported by supernatural attestations of a more direct and immediate kind. It must not only be *probable* that God has spoken, it must be *certain* that he has. The book, alone considered, as we have seen, leaves us utterly unable to comprehend how it can be of mere human origin, and induces our firm faith that it is God-given. This is important, but is not, if left unsupported, in itself sufficient. The evidence now to be introduced is proof absolute that it could have had no other origin—such direct supernatural proof as can come from God only.

Ultimately, God alone can attest his own revelation. He alone can make it absolutely certain that the communication is from himself. In some unmistakable manner he must bear witness to that fact. When men declare that God speaks through them we have only their word. It may be true or not. If they appear to be good men, and have no interest to deceive, and are not fanatical or otherwise weak, their testimony is entitled to some weight. If what they deliver is wise and promotive of good, and indicative of extraordinary insight, it strengthens the probability, but is not conclusive that they may not alone be in the communication. Before we can have absolute evidence we must be assured that God testifies. This is an essential part of the revelation. Nature is God's speech because he made it. We know it is his speech simply as we know that he made it. In like manner, we can only know the Bible to be his word in the degree in which we know his personal agency in it. Man can make a book. How is it that we may know with absolute certainty that he did not make this book? We can know it when we find in it, or in that which accompanies it, that which absolutely transcends all human power; and not until then. We know that it is directly

from God when we find that in it which God only could put in it, or when we find a testimony to it which God only could render—the absolutely supernatural element.

Let us be careful to determine precisely what we mean by this statement—by the supernatural, and by the implication that the supernatural is the necessary means to indicate the presence and agency of God in a communication and attestation of truth.

We do not separate nature from God. These several things are worthy of note : *a.* That we admit and affirm that a truth derived from nature is a truth of God, just as really Natural and supernatural. as a truth supernaturally delivered, and may be known to be such. *b.* A truth which might be derived from nature in a perfectly natural way nevertheless might be revealed, or supernaturally delivered, and might be supernaturally attested, but hardly probably would, since the existence of adequate natural means of knowledge precludes the necessity of supernatural helps or attestations. Or, *c.* Being derived without supernatural assistance, it yet might be supernaturally attested, and we can conceive cases when, for confirmation or to give special emphasis, this would be probable.

The point we make here is this : that *no deliverance, however derived, can support its claim to be a direct revelation without supernatural proof* ; and also, *certain things cannot be known without supernatural help.*

When supernatural help has been furnished to one mind to discover the truth, or when truth has been supernaturally communicated to one mind in such form that it knows the communication to be supernatural and therefore true, it cannot be known by other minds to have been supernaturally communicated without *the* supernatural or *a* supernatural attestation is vouchsafed to them also.

To every mind supernatural evidence must appear in one

form or another ere it can be known to be a revelation, or acquire authority as such. The supernatural is the indispensable evidence in the case of a revelation. The evidence which supports a revelation is as indispensable as the revelation itself. If it be not supported it loses its authority and ceases or fails to command faith in it, which is the indispensable thing. It is not only important therefore that God should speak, but it is equally so that the speech should be accompanied with the proof that it is he that speaks.

Revelation
must be super-
naturally at-
tested.

This is so not simply that we may know that he does speak, but especially for the reason that the matters conveyed in the utterance are such that the only evidence that they are true is that God declares them. God is absolutely the only competent witness. Take away the proof of that fact and there is not a particle of positive evidence of the great doctrine of the atonement, for instance, or the doctrine that God will hear prayer, or that he will forgive sin, or that man will continue to live after death, or any other of the special doctrines of the Bible.

That which gives the Bible any authority, and renders it reasonable and right that men should believe it and obey it—that makes it a power in the world and enables it to accomplish any thing for mankind—is the proof that it is God's revealed word; that is, that he is its author and that he will make its deliverances good. Take away that and it has no support; and from the nature and contents of the book it must at once be discarded as a fable. The question therefore of its supernatural origin is the question whether or not it and Christianity shall continue to exist.

It is important that we should clearly understand what we mean by the terms natural and supernatural. Bushnell, in his remarkable treatise, "Nature and the Supernatural," has fur-

nished the clearest and most satisfactory definitions and differentiations extant of these terms.*

What do we mean by supernatural? By natural we mean that which is contained in the system of nature as such. Nature comprises the whole realm of created existence. God is not contained in nature, though he is in part expressed by nature. He alone is supra-nature, that is, above and not included in it, in the true and proper sense. Differentiation between nature and the supernatural. He was before it, and is forever independent of it and totally different from it, but all that it contains is from him. Nature itself is thus seen to be of supernatural origin. Nature divides itself into two great departments or fundamentally distinct kinds and orders of existence: *things* and *powers*.

Things are what they are by creation: all tendencies in things are under laws imposed upon them in their creation, called necessary laws. The term law signifies the pre-established and fixed order; and the term necessary means that action under the law is involuntary and necessitated from without, in the case of things. Whatever results from or according to these established laws is natural to things; that is, according to their nature. Nothing else would be. By this it appears that nature, as among things, is not something apart from God; and also it appears that tendencies and effects in things which are called natural are not apart from or independent of God; but are simply such tendencies and effects as are permanent, or according to and under a fixed order which he has superimposed. It is according to the fixed order, that is, nature, for the sun to shine; for water to seek its level; for seeds to grow, under right conditions; for fire to burn; for lacerated nerves to feel pain; for oxygen and hydrogen to combine in definite proportions under certain conditions and form water; and for all other things to conform to the established laws, and not to violate them or act adversely

* See the book, and also see Note B in the Appendix.

to them. Again we repeat, nature and the natural are not an order apart from God. They are what they are by him, and the words are exhausted when they express the idea of existence and action under a fixed and permanent method superimposed by his appointment.

In the department of powers, nature means created minds — all created minds; and natural means tendencies and activities of mind which are according to, and within the sphere of, their conferred power. Nothing else is natural to them. It is natural for mind to think, to will, and to feel, but only under certain conditions or fixed laws and limitations; but it, that is, created mind, neither exists nor has power apart from God. He creates it, and determines its powers and conditions of action, beyond which it is nothing and can do nothing, but within which it acts according to the law of freedom and not of necessity, this being the most fundamental difference between its law and the law of things. It cannot act, or put forth power of any kind, beyond or above the nature it has received. Among its powers of nature, that is, powers conferred upon it, is a power to act spontaneously, or with volitional freedom, through organic instrumentalities put under its disposal, on the system of nature external to itself, so as to produce changes which otherwise would not take place—which are not provided for by the natural law of and among things: as it can invent and make a house, a ship, a printing-press, a steam-engine. Dr. Bushnell incorrectly, as we think, classes this power of the mind as supernatural. These definitions clearly fix the idea of nature and the natural in both departments of things and powers, which comprise the entire realm, and show that by nature we mean the whole of created existence, with definite and permanent laws over and among them; and by natural we mean all tendencies and effects existing and transpiring under and according to established law. Throughout,

God is sole fountain and source. And as God is before all nature and all effects in nature, he is the true and only supernatural; and nature, which is originated by him, is of supernatural origin in all its contents, but is not itself supernatural.

Since nature thus includes all created existence, and the laws and limitations under which all things and powers exist and act; and since our knowledge of created existence and the laws and limitations of their tendencies and power of action is limited, it is obvious enough that we cannot know the entire contents of the natural, and may be liable to account that supernatural which is not. But this does not make it impossible to us to determine the supernatural beyond possibility of doubt in given cases.

The supernatural is sometimes understood to mean the supra-mundane spiritual universe, or the spiritual realm as distinguished from the material; beings above and beyond our realm; but the use is not in strictness correct. It is better to designate the spiritual realm as the supersensible; that is, beings not cognized by sense and not under the reign of physical law.

By the supernatural in the strict sense, *as to being and power*, is meant He who is not included in nature, but is before and above nature, and by whom nature exists; and *as to action or effect*, is meant an action or effect not possible to nature under the fixed and permanent order which has been imposed upon it; an action or effect brought about on nature, or in nature, or through nature, in a way not provided for in the system itself under its permanent and established order; an action or effect produced immediately by the Author of nature, outside of what would take place but for his interference and immediate agency. That is, the supernatural as to being is the equivalent to the Uncreated, while the natural as to being is the exact equation of the created; and the supernatural as to act and effect is that kind

Difference between supersensible and supernatural.

of act or effect which is not produced by a created being under its law, but by the Creator himself in the free use of his power. Should it be said that God himself has a nature, and therefore what he does is natural, and so there is no supernatural either in being or action, this would be a mere play upon words which would not change the case in the slightest degree, since the terms are employed with a perfectly definite meaning; that is, to distinguish between the created and the Uncreated—the Author of creation and creation itself. If any choose to say that any act of God must be according to his own nature, and therefore natural, we make no objection, provided he remember that we employ the term Supernatural simply to distinguish him from created things, and his actions from actions of created beings, springing from or limited by imposed constitution and laws; or to denote that most fundamental difference, the difference between One who is eternal and all others, which are by him.

But how, then, shall we be able to determine what is supernatural? that is, what emanates from the Uncreated directly pointing to his agency alone, and what from the created under its law? We have admitted the difficulty of certainty of knowledge in every case, growing out of our limited acquaintance with the order of nature. As we find that man has power to produce certain effects on material nature which the mere natural law superimposed upon things would not account for, it must be admitted that possibly there may be other beings within the created realm who have still greater power than he, and who might produce changes greater than he can produce, but which are perfectly natural to them; and it must also be admitted that men who possess some occult knowledge might be able to perform acts, or rather produce effects, which to the uninitiated might appear

How to determine the supernatural.

to be supernatural, when in fact they were entirely within the sphere of the natural, and implied no extraordinary power at all. This fact has been pressed into the service of the idea that it is impossible for us to distinguish between the natural and supernatural, and so the evidential value of what we call a supernatural event is entirely destroyed. If this were true, it would inevitably follow that it is impossible for God to attest a deliverance of his if he were disposed to make it, since he could give no sign which would show him to be its author.

If it should be said, Since God is the author of nature, whatever is according to or from nature has the same evidence of truth as though it were supernaturally delivered and attested, we do not dispute it. The point we make is, that there is a realm of truth higher than nature; truths in the mind of God, but not vested in any or all created beings; truths of his thought and plan which nature cannot deliver, because nature has them not, since God has not delivered them in nature. The sources of these are also not in created mind; there are no facts from which they can be deduced outside of God; to be known absolutely, new facts must be given from the fountain of all facts. The deliverance is a revelation outside of and above all the contents of the created system. To the much truth within the natural realm this is added from the supernatural. No one can pretend that all of God is contained in or manifested by nature; and if he should desire to add to the manifestation, no one can pretend that it is impossible.

The point we make is, that this added truth so delivered should be attested by God, as the truths derivable from nature are. God is the witness in the natural realm. When we find its contents we know that we find his mind, because we know that he is its author.

More truth in
God than is
given in nat-
ure.

God must di-
rectly witness
to his own rev-
elation.

We need the same kind of proof to the contents of the revelation; that is, we want to know that it is true, by having it proved that he is its author. That can only be proved by himself. The proof can only reach us from him. And since it is not a thing in nature, the proof must be from without nature; that is, it must be supernatural.

Suppose, for example, it should be important for man to know more fully and clearly certain things with respect to his relations to his Maker than is possible to him as shut up in nature; that is, more than external nature can teach him, and more than his own internal nature can teach him, and which only the infinite Spirit can teach him, because it is a truth which lies locked up in the infinite Spirit and has never been translated into nature; how should he be able to get that knowledge but by an immediate revelation? And if communicated by revelation, how could it be evidenced without supernatural signs, since nature knows nothing about it? Is it said the case is not supposable? Can we be sure of that?

If such a communication were made supernaturally—that is, delivered directly from God—how would the person receiving it know its source or its truth if not attended by some sign that would prove its supernatural origin? He could not appeal to nature external or internal for the proof, for neither can furnish any thing whatever on the matter. The evidence must accompany the communication and be furnished by its author; that is, both the knowledge and evidence must be supernatural in their source.

Suppose such a direct communication to have been made, and in such manner as to convince the recipient that God is its source, it would thereby acquire for him the authority of a revelation; but when he makes

How shall revelation be attested?

it known to others, how shall they know it to be a revelation? Does it stand in the same relation to them it does to him? Certainly not. To them it is but the word of a man. Should the first recipient declare that he had it from God it would not change the case; it would be but the word of a man, and the very claim set up would discredit it. How, then, shall it acquire the place and authority of a revelation to those who receive it at second-hand? They cannot find proof that it is a revelation, in nature, external or internal, for it is a truth, if a truth, not contained in nature, and therefore not possible to be proved by nature. The assumption that it is a revelation in that case has no foundation whatever but the unsupported declaration of the man who professes to have received it, and it can acquire none from any source but its original. It must remain forever unproved, unless supernaturally attested in the second case as in the first. To this end it must be accompanied in some form by a supernatural sign which would be as convincing to these as the inspiration was to the favored few who received it.

This is precisely what we claim for the Bible; that it is in essential parts a deliverance from God directly, in which a substance of truth is made known which could not be educed from nature because not contained in it, and which is attested by the supernatural sign of its origin. As the truth is something which could not be derived from or supported by nature, it must forever remain unsupported unless supernaturally attested. The testimony must be of such a kind as the author of the revelation alone could give. This wanting, the foundation must forever remain insecure. The supernatural proof is really, if not the only proof, certainly the finishing proof. It might, indeed, be a revelation, and might be accepted as such by multitudes, and in it they might find rest. It might even, when em-

braced, bring assurances of its divine character, as it uniformly does. But this, while of great value, is not the thing which is required, and alone is not adequate to the ends of proof that the content is true. It could not be adequate to the demands of reason, even for the person himself who has the assurance. It would be possible to bring it into doubt on the ground of possible delusion. But it would be wholly unavailable for the conviction of others—would be no proof to the uninitiated. It must convince the resisting. It is addressed to sinful men. It demands acceptance of the unwilling. It has no other power to win but its power to convince. This must be as complete as possible. Where issues so vast are involved, no possible proof can be spared. Without supernatural attestation within the reach of all, it lacks the essential thing.

If the contents of the so-called revelation were simply of matters that might be found out or accredited to the reason merely by a knowledge of what nature teaches, the supernatural attest might be useless, and so would become improbable, as would the revelation itself; but this is what is not the case. The things contained in the book are what no knowledge of nature can impart: they are outside of and beyond nature. They are things which are known only to God until he reveals them. They are things of which he alone can be witness. Therefore it is that the book must have a supernatural origin; and therefore it is that the proof must also be supernatural—proof which shows that God is the direct source, and that it could have no other source, because it is not in the power of nature to furnish it.

In the absence of the supernatural attest we have but such proof as the character of the communication and the character of the communicant furnish. These constitute an indispensable kind of proof, but wholly inadequate to the demands of the case when it meets the resistance of critical reason or

interested prejudice, or even justifiable carefulness. It is not alone such a proof as we have a right to require, and not such a proof as He who knows the nature of the mind he has created must feel himself under obligation to furnish. As the author of the revelation, he is bound by the demands he makes upon faith to furnish proof that it is immediately from him.

There are two ways in which the further demand might be met, either separately or conjointly; but both of them are supernatural. The one is to attend the revelation ^{Two ways of proof.} himself, whenever presented, by an immediate influence on the mind addressed, inclining and convincing it. This there is reason to believe as a general, perhaps universal fact, he does. God is in his word, and by his Spirit bears witness to it, even as he is in the hearts of men universally with some measure of illumination. This branch of supernatural testifying is most important, but we have the feeling that for the establishment of an absolute authority it is inadequate. To leave men without excuse something more is necessary. He who gave the revelation well knew that it would meet with strong resistance from the pride of human reason and the wickedness of human passion. He knew, also, that the mind is so liable to delusions from fallacious judgments and misinterpretations of its own consciousness, and so encompassed with snares of error, that in matters of so great importance it would need not only help, but protection. He knew that to establish a kingdom of truth it must be able to stand on immovable foundations, and that these must include every variety of proof the nature of the subject would allow. To the internal witnessing of his Spirit he saw it wise, therefore, to add a second kind of (external) supernatural proof in the form of miraculous attestations.

The divine Master himself acknowledges the necessity of

this, and on it stakes the whole issue of his claim. Much has been said against it; but it is doubtful if there is any mind that does not feel that from the nature of the case it is required. The very opposition to it grows out of the feeling that it is the stronghold of revelation. Nothing more convincingly proves its power than the virulence with which the enemies of revelation continue to attack it.

Either it is of supernatural origin, and is attested by supernatural proof, or it is not. If it is, it is so for a sufficient reason, and the fact cannot be retired or obscured without a wrong to the book, a wrong to its author, and a wrong to mankind. If it is not, it is, by that determination, reduced not merely to the grade of a simply human book, and so divested of any special authority, but it is degraded to the rank of a sheer and blasphemous imposture, fuller of falsehood than truth, and misleading the world into expensive follies and gross impieties. In the former case its heroes are a noble race of divine teachers, whose lives have been of immeasurable blessing to mankind, and whose mediatorial ministries have lifted the world toward God; in the latter, they are a succession of ingenious and successful knaves, whose cunning hypocrisies have whelmed the ages with gross superstition of beliefs and profitless and impious practices. In the former case, it is its right to dictate law to mankind; to be received cordially and obeyed implicitly; it is its mission to enlighten and elevate; to purify and save; to lead up a race of sinful and degenerate beings to immortal holiness and happiness; it is the best and noblest boon that an infinite and loving God has bestowed upon his needy human children, and ought to elicit adoring gratitude. In the latter, it is a base intruder, whose presence has enslaved and corrupted mankind, and it has no right to the "holy of holies" in our homes and temples and hearts.

Either it is a
revelation or it
is not.

Convict prophets and apostles and Jesus of imposture in appropriating the sacred name of God to give sanction to their groundless inventions; brand them as pretenders merely in all their professions; write deceit and fraud opposite their most sacred words and acts: then use words of compliment who can. They claim miraculous commission. On this their merits must be tried. The issue is simple and direct. "If the claim be false, those who make it must be either impostors or fanatics; and hence they must rank lower, either in simple honesty or wisdom and good sense, than good men of an ordinary stamp who have never been guilty of so great an extravagance. The mere existence of this claim on their part, when once proved, shuts out every compromise. Those cannot be safe guides, as mere human teachers and moralists, who have either feigned or fancied a direct commission from Heaven they never received. It is absurd in this case to deny the authority of the message, and still to look up to the messengers with high admiration and peculiar deference. We ought rather to abhor them for their dishonesty or to pity them for their delusion. The remark of a modern skeptical writer has a wider application than to the doctrine and the moral virtue directly named in it. When the New Testament attributes humility to Christ it is manifestly under the notion of him as a divine being, who has descended from a celestial condition into the lower state of human suffering and degradation. As soon as Jesus is regarded as a mere man, the reversed condition of necessity requires the corresponding reversal of the moral characteristic into one or another phase of lofty doing and unmeasured aspiration." * It is a great mistake to suppose that the miracles and alleged fulfillments of prophecy are a mere excrescence, which may be entirely pruned away, leaving behind them a system of pure morality unaltered and unim-

* Birks, p. 42.

paired. They form the woof of the whole narrative, so that almost every page and every main fact receives the stamp of a divine authorship, or else is tainted with a hopeless leprosy of fraud and delusion.

If supernatural proof be necessary to attest the Bible, it must be possible to evince the supernatural. The theory proves nothing; what are the facts? This is at last the crucial test. Those who allege the supernatural element must point it out. Those who deny must grapple with the facts. If the alleged facts can be disproved, or if they can be explained on natural principles, the theory of supernaturalism must be abandoned. If they can neither be disproved nor explained on natural principles, the theory makes good its claim and ought to be accepted. That there are things in the Bible which, if true, must have been supernaturally communicated is indisputable. Such are the Mosaic account of creation, the deliverance of the law on Mount Sinai, the doctrine of human redemption as laid down in both the Old and New Testaments. That there are alleged facts in both the Old and New Testaments which, if they did occur, were supernatural, is also incontrovertible; such are the inspiration of the prophets, so as to enable them to forecast future contingent events; the miracles of the translations of Enoch and Elijah; the wonders in Egypt and the wilderness; the deliverance of Daniel from the lions; the escape alive of the three Hebrews from the fiery furnace; the consuming of Elijah's sacrifice; the hand writing on the wall at Belshazzar's feast; the appearance of the angels to Abraham, to Jacob, to Moses; the burning bush; the appearance of the angel Gabriel to Daniel; the annunciation of the same angel to Mary; the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost; the conception; the appearance of the angel to the shepherds proclaiming the birth of

Jesus; the star which led the wise men; the appearance of the angel to Joseph on several occasions; the scene at the baptism of Jesus; his fast and temptation; the miracles of turning water into wine; of giving sight on several occasions to the blind; of miraculous cures too numerous to mention; of raising the son of the widow of Nain and of raising Lazarus of Bethany from the dead; of walking on the lake and calming the tempest; of the transfiguration; of the wonders at the crucifixion; of his own resurrection; of the appearance of the dead after that resurrection; of his ascension; the miraculous descent of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues (Acts ii, 1-12); the miracles wrought by the apostles, as the healing of the lame man at the gate of the temple (chap. iii, 1-11); the sick cured by the shadow of Peter (chap. v, 15, 16); the apostles freed from prison by the intervention of an angel (chap. v, 19-26); the vision of Stephen when being stoned (vii, 55, 56); the raising of Dorcas from the dead (chap. ix, 36-42); the visions of angels to Cornelius (chap. x, 1-8); the conversion of Paul by a vision (chap. ix, 1-9); many other visions of angels (chap. ix, 10-18; x, 9-16; xii, 1-17; xii, 22, 23; xvi, 8-10; xviii, 9, 10; xxii, 17-21; xxiii, 11); and visions, with cures and miracles, throughout Palestine and the cities of Asia Minor, extending over a period of many years, to which must be added the vision of John on the Isle of Patmos. This is a very incomplete list, collected from both Testaments; and it should be remembered that the writers declare that they make mention only of a small part; that were the chronicle of the works that Jesus alone did complete, the world would not hold the books, that is, it would be a cumbrous detail.

That these facts are put on record as supernatural, and that they were so, it is impossible to doubt. What must be done with them? Must they be accounted as *lies*, and

dismissed without examination? This is boldly avowed by Lecky and others, on the ground that all such stories are incredible.* This indeed would be a summary method of disposing of a problem that has elicited more thought and exerted wider influence than any that has ever engaged the attention of mankind. It will hardly "down" at the waving of such a wand. This brief and imperfect collocation shows how pervasive the supernatural element is. Some would advise the expurgation of the book; but what should we have left? Remove the *lies*, and what market of the world would thank us for the residuum? The expurgation would indeed make the Bible a very undisturbing book. *Wise men* and *scholars* would sleep quietly enough, and the printing-presses of the world would find other employment than flooding the nations with its teachings or the wrangles over its authority. Its apparition would then walk the earth without alarming its guilt, or molesting the quiet, or arousing the fear, of those who fatten on the wrongs they inflict on mankind; the impertinence of the sabbath bell would be hushed; Moses and Jesus would be as meaningless sounds as Zeus and Woden, and the great world would roll in its orbit of darkness, burying its children and piling up their graves, without the impertinence of either hope or fear. Would it? When the human heart is bereft of its instinct of immortality; when reason ceases to find God at the end of inquiries; when conscience knows no ethical distinctions; when love turns to ashes on the emberless altar of the affections—Yes. Till then the architects of ruin would no sooner get rid of one set of supernaturals than they must begin to build altars to another. Meantime, it is an interesting inquiry whether those men who indict the Bible as a budget of clumsy frauds, and its heroes and authors as knaves or dupes, should escape the imputation of

* See Appendix, Note

knavery themselves when they read morals from the one and pronounce encomiums on the other to adorn the nakedness of their own moralizing, and to give grace and richness to the poverty of their own inventions. The honest Saxon mind demands either that we give up the Bible or admit its claim; and before either, it demands that its facts should be treated with fairness. If it be true, it is a tremendous truth—it will stand forever. Neither unbelief, nor ribald jest, nor insulting compliment will empty it of its meaning or rob it of its power. Its calumniators will pass like shadows over the rock and hasten to oblivion. It will remain untouched when they and their follies have perished together!

THE ARGUMENT FROM PROPHECY.

WE claim for the Bible two kinds of supernatural attests—Prophecy and Miracle. These are the two great seals God sets to his word, whereby he declares himself speaker. They are his sign-manual, which cannot be counterfeited.

First, we introduce *Prophecy*. By prophecy we mean the forecasting and the foretelling of events in such kind and manner as the human mind, left to its own unaided power, is incapable of doing; and the announcement of them as communicated by God, in order that the person making the announcement may acquire the authority of God for his utterances.

In order to test the value of this evidence, and bring out its full strength, some attention must be given to one or two points involved in the argument. A prophecy acquires not all its absolute value until the time of and after its fulfillment. Up to that its value is uncertain and problematical. There must be other grounds of belief, serving as a basis of faith, which will find their supplement and completeness when fulfillment crowns prediction. The greater the distance of time, the more minute and circumstantial the prophecy, and the more contingent the events, the stronger will be the evidential value. If a number of separate minds living in distinct periods contribute discrete parts, combining in the fulfillment an unexpected unity and completeness, that fact adds force to each several part. Two things are absolutely necessary: the prophecy must have been in anticipation of the fulfillment, and that must be established by adequate proof. These conditions being secured, the supernatural element becomes absolutely certain.

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The certainty grows out of the fact that the human mind is destitute of the power of prescience. This is a universal truth of consciousness—an invariable characteristic recognized and known by all. We are endowed with faculties by which we can know things present with us in time and space, and things of the past which were subjects of personal knowledge, or of which we become informed in various ways, but neither any individual minds nor all minds combined have power to penetrate the future, in any respect, for the space of a single hour. We have absolutely no faculty for that. We are as impotent to it as a totally blind man is to sight. If there ever should occur a case of prescience in the true and proper sense, it would as much imply a miracle as if a man who was not simply blind, but who had not even the rudiment of an eye, should be suddenly endowed with the power of vision. The presence of the acquired power could in neither case be accounted for except by an extraneous agency. This is an essential point of the argument, and with the greatest emphasis we call attention to it. It is not within the possibility of the human, by any faculty which it possesses, to know any thing whatever of the future. There may be other beings, that are not constituted as we are, that possess that power; we do not. There are two sets of facts which seem to contradict this position. Possibly they have occurred to you already.

First, the well-known fact that learned astronomers are able to predict, and have predicted, astronomical events to the distance of thousands of years, and the event, so far as time has elapsed, has answered the prediction. But this is in fact no exception. All that the astronomer knows in the case is, the present existence of certain facts and laws, as the relation and movements of the planetary or

The human
mind no power
to foresee.

How astro-
nomers know fu-
ture eclipses.

stellar bodies. He has ascertained these according to the methods of his science; they are found to be perfectly fixed and uniform. Basing his calculation upon these, he is enabled to determine the result for a thousand or ten thousand years with perfect accuracy, so as to fix the exact hour of an eclipse or occultation; a sublime proof of the perfection of the celestial mechanism and of the exactness of his calculations, but implying no more knowledge of the future than is possessed by ordinary men—that is, none at all. It is purely a mathematical process. He preannounces on the authority of his science that a definitive result will take place at a time in the remote future *if* movements which are now transpiring should continue. To illustrate: were a great wheel of a thousand feet in diameter arranged on some eminence so that it would revolve at a perfectly invariable rate of motion, say at a velocity of one foot in a hundred years, and were a diamond-point set in its periphery and made to stand at a hair-line at some immovable part of the framework at the time of the starting of the revolution, any school-boy could predict that if the motion should be maintained and unchanged the diamond-point would return to the place of its departure, and make its transit of the hair line, at a precise second three hundred thousand years hence and an exact fraction; and those who might be living would find it punctual to its time. But in all this there would be no foresight, but simply a knowledge of the rate of motion. The problem might be varied endlessly, and ingeniously complicated in various ways, but no new element could come into it. It is on this principle that we predicate events in the system of nature within the scope of common observation, as that the sun will come to its rising to-morrow morning or at the same time next year. We predicate without any feeling of uncertainty, because of the long-established uniformity of nature, but we do so with the perfect consciousness that we

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absolutely know nothing as to the fact itself, but only know of a general law by which, on condition of its continuance, the event will be brought about. With the same degree of certainty we predicate of less fixed and scientifically determinable things; as that steamships will continue to ply between Liverpool and New York in the year of our Lord 2000. We might push the point along to 3000, but we should not be quite so certain, showing that we are guessing. This introduces the second seeming exception, but which we shall find is no exception to the above rule.

If on the principle of the permanence of nature we prognosticate what will be and go forward with entire confidence, planting in the spring certain of a harvest in the autumn, on the same principle we calculate on events How we guess future events. to happen among men in the conduct of their affairs within certain limits. We do not hesitate to predict that the world will go on much as it has gone on: men will still be born and die, commerce will thrive, civilization will advance, Africa will some day become peopled by civilized men, South America will yet be covered with powerful and well-ordered states, means of intercommunication will improve in all lands, science will be better and more generally developed. We become even more definite, and say that certain special things will take place: a great election is progressing, we are sure our favorite will be successful; a war opens, we declare beforehand which party will win; a painful controversy has arisen, we see in advance the outcome; a young man develops certain elements of character, we forecast his honor or disgrace, as the case may be. Thus, in relation to almost every thing the seeds of which are with us, we prognosticate the outcome; but in all this there is no foresight. We know certain existing facts, we infer outcomes from them. In proportion as our information is good, and our power of reasoning strong, there is a probability

that our conclusions will be proximately correct. There is no special knowledge whatever in the case—we reach a conclusion of reason, nothing more. There is nothing of the nature of prophecy in our inferences, if they should come true.

It is essential to an event of prophecy that it should be strictly future; that is, that there should be no present means of inferring it. It must not be a possible deduction from any knowledge of mere present facts. Essential to prophecy that no present means of knowing exists. There must be that in the predicted outcome which cannot be traced to any thing which we could know as now existing.

This condition being met, should the event occur it becomes evident that it must have been communicated to us in some supernatural way, just in the degree in which it cannot be attributed to a happy accident. This is precisely the ground we lay down for the argument from prophecy. We assert, and will show, that in numerous instances and without a single failure the prophets announced, long ages before their occurrence, events which it was impossible they should know any thing about except by supernatural help. The case shall be made out with perfect clearness, and upon it we stake the issue of the supernatural character of the Bible.

Prophecy is a wide scheme. We cannot undertake to survey the entire field, but before we specialize we remind you of its wondrous breadth and sublimity. The scope of prophecy. It opens with the first chapter of the Bible, and, like a stream deepening and widening as it flows, swells into a vast river as it descends the centuries, until at the end of four thousand years it utters its closing and most sublime sentence in the last chapter of the Apocalypse. In its course it sweeps through all time, now adumbrating the fate of na-

tions and world-renowned cities and empires, anon sketching the destiny of men and systems, but having for its chief and grandest function to trace the rise and spread of the divine kingdom on earth, the coming of the Son of God, the wonders of his mission, his matchless character and matchless deeds, the struggles and adversities of its course in its beginnings, until, gathering resistless strength, it finally sweeps away all opposing systems of superstition and wrong, ascends the throne of the world, and inaugurates an era of universal peace and happiness among men: then, rising with a bolder flight, it depicts the closing scene of earth's history, the final coming of the Son of man, the transformation of the physical world itself, and the magnificent dawn of the everlasting age. One only needs to be caught up in the roll of its mighty events to feel that he stands amid the unutterable sublimities of an infinite plan; that he is following the march of events to a consummation worthy of the majesty of God. We occupy a stand-point in the middle of the amazing scheme. Behind us in the six thousand years of past history is a cycle of completed events, filling the exact measure of the accurate chart up to date; around us are the proofs of its complete fulfillment until now; the unfulfilled comes to meet us. Thicker and stronger becomes the God-wrought column on which our faith rests as the flight of time gathers to it and twists into its build each new fulfillment, making certain the greater sublimities which remain to follow. In the language of another:

“Inspiration soars beyond the reach of imagination's wing. While the messenger of the King of kings speaks, royal splendor is but tawdry ornament and royal majesty is dwarfed by a sublime Presence. In the words spoken there is an awful emphasis and a superhuman boldness. The sentence of doom is traced by a mysterious hand upon the walls of palaces that have rung with blasphemous revels. Kings

and leaders of mighty armies are laid aside like pawns on the chess-board. History becomes a record of the epitaphs of nations, while beyond the grave-yard of centuries, that witness their rise and receive their dust, rises in the back-ground the 'kingdom which shall never be destroyed.' Did these prophets speak of themselves, or as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? It is a great question—a momentous one. Let the man who classes their inspiration with that of the heathen poets explain to us their incomparable superiority. Why is it that as we listen to them Olympus becomes a mole-hill, and the grandest conceptions that heathen imagination could frame of the gods sink beneath contempt? How was it that they rose to such consistent, exalted, majestic conceptions of the great Ruler of nations and of men? How was it, that, called from their herds and vineyards, they poured forth strains that have held the ears of nations enchanted for more than twenty centuries? Was all this only the outburst of native genius? Do we here witness simply the bloom of flowers that happened to be rooted in the soil of Palestine, but might have been matured as well on the banks of the Indus or the shores of the *Ægean*?

“Even if we could have been in doubt before, the unrolled map of prophecy, laid alongside of the chart of history, shows us that their inspiration was from above. They had with the poet's beauty and the poet's fire the insight and the foresight of the seer. . . . Again and again it seems as though the prophet stood on the *Pisgah* of time, and through the dim and hazy atmosphere discerned the headlands and mountain chains and river courses of the distant future. If we find literal and exact fulfillments of predictions uttered centuries before—fulfillments which no human sagacity could have foreseen, fulfillments that never could have been brought about by the predictions themselves—we are forced to the single and inevitable

conclusion that 'holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.' " *

It is worthy of particular note that the holy men who were endowed with this wonderful power of forecasting remote events were also endowed with power whereby to produce immediate conviction by evincing a higher kind of knowledge than was common to men with respect to current events. Not simply by the sanctity of their lives, but by miracles of wisdom and power, they were able to convince those to whom they were sent that they were the messengers of God, and thus to impart an authority to their words which rendered them sacred and prompted their preservation as divine communications. It is historically certain that they were received and regarded as divine teachers in their own time by reason of infallible signs which attended them before most of their predictions could be fulfilled. It is not pretended that fulfilled prophecy is the only proof of their commission. It is one infallible proof; immediate superior knowledge was another—knowledge of the mind of God which could only be discerned by inspiration; miracles were another. The supernatural is as necessary in the one as in the other. Miracles of present knowledge and insight and power, combined with extraordinary sanctity of character and declarations of a divine commission, were the special attestations on the authority of which they were received. They were both necessary and adequate signs at the time. They retain their value to us unimpaired; that is, true then they are true forever; but distance of time impairs attendant signs, and introduces elements of uncertainty which did not at first exist. But if time impairs the vividness of those signs which immediately attended the divine messengers, it also brings compensations in fulfilled prophecy, so that the proof is not less to us than it was to those who at first received the messages, but rather greater.

* Gillett, pp. 15, 16.

Prophecy has this advantage—that it is cumulative; an ever-increasing and present witness to inspiration. It is a chart
Cumulative evidence of prophecy. ever unraveling. Each new fulfillment becomes a new demonstration. We have more proof of the inspiration of the prophets than those who heard them, possibly more than they had themselves. It is a perpetual and ever-present testimony. The fulfillment is yet transpiring before our eyes. We are witnesses to-day of a miracle, the greatest of all, in the exact accomplishment of what was written thousands of years ago.

Yet once more, before we proceed to the examination of test prophecies, let us give attention to the matter of the antecedence
Antecedence of prophecy to fulfillment. of the utterance to the event. This is an essential condition to the existence of prophecy. If the writing was subsequent to the event, we have in the so-called prophecies only fraud and imposture, and they sink down from the eminence of supernatural inspirations to the low level of contemptible chicanery. At this point adverse criticism has attempted to make a stand, but without success. We ask no more than the most grudging give us for a clear and perfect case. With all its boast, criticism has not been able to invalidate the claim to antiquity set up by Holy Scripture. It has proved to be impregnable to the most virulent attacks with which any writing was ever assailed. Fair and ordinary criticism—that is, the application of such rules as are deemed sufficient in usual cases—would never awaken suspicion in a candid mind; but the sacred books have been subjected to extraordinary and disingenuous scrutiny, and to methods inspired by hate, for the sole purpose of bringing them into discredit. There is no reason to doubt that the faith of many has been weakened, not upon just ground, but by the simple cry of fraud and by an apparent show of learning. But, base as the

malignity has been, it was perhaps best that it should have been expressed since it existed, and since it has served to develop the invulnerability of the holy books to any possible assault, and their ability to meet the most unreasonable demands, and since the desire to find a weak place in the defenses of revelation has led to a search into antiquity which has brought to light much valuable knowledge which perhaps otherwise never would have been elicited. A second time the world is indebted to the sacred writings for its only knowledge of remote ages.

But what is the case? The holy book called the Bible is with us. The part of it called the Old Testament is accepted by Jews and Christians the world over as genuine and authentic. The part of it called the New Testament is, confessedly by all, the foundation of the Christian faith. It is safe to say the genuineness of these writings never would have been called in question any more than that of the "Anabasis" of Zenophon, or of the "Commentaries" of Cæsar, or of the "History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" by Gibbon, but for their extraordinary pretensions to inspiration, and the manner in which they influenced mankind. Hence have sprung unreasoning hate and resistance. How shall we account for the presence of the Bible among us to-day? Is it genuine? that is, was it written by the men whose names it bears, and at the time when it purports to have been written, or is it an ingenious fiction of some later day? To this we are bound to answer, that it bears all the marks of absolute genuineness.

First, it is mainly historical; and it is impossible to make out that it has falsified history in a single case, while recent discoveries verify its historic verity beyond dispute. Now when the substance of a book is true, the *prima facie* evidence is that its source is genuine, and it must so be regarded until the contrary

is shown; but this probability becomes greatly strengthened where the truth of the contents is such that an authorship later than the age when the events occurred can be shown to be impossible, for the want of sources of information. In most cases this could not be shown, but fortunately in the case of the Bible it can. It details facts of Jewish, Assyrian, Persian, and Egyptian history which could not be collated from any sources known to men, from any writings extant at any period within which we know these writings were in their integrity. It is absolutely certain that behind these there were no records from which the material could be gathered; and yet the facts recorded have been verified by recent discoveries in Layard, Rawlinson, and Smith. The sacred history must have been written at an early time, when the facts were accessible.

To this must be added the veritable fact that we are able to track the canon back substantially to its origin. No one disputes the integrity of the entire volume, as How we trace the canon. we now find it, at the opening of the second century of the Christian era; that is, at the very dawn of the Christian age. The New Testament books make about two hundred references to the Old Testament as the then well-known and universally accepted sacred book of the Jews. The evidence from profane sources that the Old Testament then existed in precisely its present form, and that its authenticity was not called in question, is undoubted. The proof is complete that it circulated at the time of the advent, and for two hundred years had done, in the well-known Septuagint translation. It is referred to as unquestioned by Hecataeus of Abdera, who lived in the fourth century before Christ; by Manetho, the Egyptian, who was contemporary with Alexander; by Lysimachus of Alexandria; by Eupolemus, and by Hellanicus, who was contemporary with Herodotus.* Thus the evidence

* See Rawlinson's notes, pp. 254-257.

is complete that the Old Testament was in existence at least four hundred years before Christ, and was received and viewed by the Jews as a true and genuine history of God's dealings with their fathers.

The literature of the Christian era is a standing proof of the antiquity of the Bible, and also of its credibility. As a conglomerate rock or pudding-stone shows that the pebbles and stones which are cemented together existed at the time and antecedently to the hardening of the calcareous, silicious, and argillaceous substance which binds them together into a common mass, so the quotations from the sacred books, and references to them by name or otherwise, which are found in all literature for the past eighteen hundred years and more, show their existence, that is, the existence of the original records, when the fluent mass was in a formative state—the pebbles of quotation and reference existed antecedently to the hard and fast matrix which contains them. How else could they be introduced? It is found that any age from the first Christian century furnishes enough of these fragments in the current literature recombined to almost compose the original text itself. The bed-rock from which these fragments were quarried, and which furnishes the staple materials and the ornamental gems of the ever-growing walls of human thought, is shown to have been the pre-existing ledge or inexhaustible mass of Jewish Scriptures. It is not the Jew Philo or Josephus alone who bear testimony to the antiquity of their books, but all heathen authors whose works, or fragments of whose works, have reached us from that remote age bear similar testimony.*

Immense learning has been employed in every variety of friendly and unfriendly criticism without in the least invalidat-

* For the most recent and exhaustive *résumé* of the whole subject see "Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures," by Dr. Harman. He gives the last results of scholarship in the first fifty pages of his learned work.

ing the claim of antiquity, reaching into several hundred years before the beginning of the Christian age, for all the canonical books of the older Scriptures. It is impossible there should be error on the main point in this important controversy.

That the Old Testament, from which the prophetic argument is chiefly derived, is authentic, is established by many conclusive proofs. The prophecies themselves, in their fulfillment, demonstrate the source, but there are other proofs.

These very books, we know by the most indubitable evidence, were translated from the ancient text in Hebrew and Chaldee into Greek more than two thousand years ago, 280 B. C. As early as that date they were widely known as the holy books of the Jews, and called by way of eminence the Scriptures. Later apocryphal books were never acknowledged as of the same dignity and authenticity, though they were sometimes bound up in the same collection. Neither Josephus nor Philo (who lived about the time of Christ, and who adhered to the ancient faith), nor the New Testament, makes any reference to the questionable books, while they evince as much and as reverent submission to the books now recognized as canonical as the most orthodox Christians have done in any age.*

The Targums, some of which date near the time of Josephus and Philo, not later than the second and probably in the first century, or earlier still, as that of Onkelos and that of Jonathan Ben Uzziel, show plainly that the books were the same as now acknowledged by both Jew and Christian.†

The Samaritan Pentateuch, which unmistakably dates back to 800, or probably 1000 B. C., accords with the Pentateuch as it has come to us in direct line.

All the recent discoveries gathered in such rich abundance from ancient pre-Christian ruins add their testimony to the in-

* See Shedd, "Dogmatic Theology," vol. i, p. 138.

† See Horne, "Introduction," and Lardner.

tegrity and accuracy of the same text; and the epigraphy and geography, not only of the holy land but of surrounding nations, from the Euphrates to the Nile and the borders of what was known as the Great Sea, bear the same testimony to this day. No one can travel through these lands without discovering in their physical features and monumental remains evidence that the story of the holy books of the Jews is a voice coming from the remotest antiquity, and that it is absolutely veracious. The hills and rivers and the whole surface of the earth teem with evidence that the writings are realistic, and that they come to us from ages whose history was transpiring when Babylon and Nineveh and Memphis were in their glory, and when the events themselves were well known and fresh in the memories of living witnesses or recent and well-attested history. No one can adduce either records, or traditions, or antiquarian relics contradictive of the biblical account in any particular.

To these considerations must be added the fact that the sacred books were guarded with the greatest care, and furnished the temple reading and the household literature of the Jewish people throughout the pre-Christian ages from the time of Moses to the close of the sacred canon. The language in which the ancient text was delivered is monumental proof of the antiquity of the origin of the books.

The jealousy of rival sects is the guarantee that not a jot or tittle was changed either before or since the Christian age. The facts which now make it impossible that any real change should be introduced without being detected by vigilant students were operative in all past time.

To this must be added the difficulty—may we not safely say the impossibility?—of introducing writings such as make up the sacred books at any subsequent age, and imposing them so that they should be accepted and take their place unchallenged

as the well-known and always acknowledged and publicly recognized sacred books of the nation.

In the total absence of a hint to the contrary, and in the presence of monumental proofs and rites and customs universally observed as deriving their existence and authority from these records, is it not absolutely impossible that the records themselves should be a fraud palmed off on a later age? Can any one pretend that such a thing could be possible in this age? If not now, why could it be more possible in any other age?

For the full scope of the argument the reader is referred to such works as Lardner's "Body of Christian Evidence," Stillingfleet's "Origines Sacræ," Horne's "Introduction," and other similar works. They are exhaustive and unanswerable.* To these should be added, as treating the subject in another form, Leslie's "Short Method," and Leland's "Deistical Writers," and "Need of Revelation." No one can go through the argument, with a fair and unprejudiced mind, without reaching the conclusion that the Scripture books as now found in the sacred canon are genuine and authentic. It is impossible they should have been forgeries. There is no need for the purposes of this argument that greater space should be given to this point.

We now propose to show that this ancient book is replete, not simply with veracious history, but also with supernatural revelations in the form of prophecies which have been fulfilled in the Christian age, or which are now being fulfilled before the eyes of the living generation. The truth of the historical contents of the sacred books and the supernaturalism pervasive of them, determined by fulfilled prophecy and their marvelous

* See Horne's "Introduction," vol. i, pp. 72-228. This will be found to be a complete digest. Also, see Note D of the Appendix, and read in this immediate connection. See also Harman's "Introduction to the Holy Scriptures," chap. v.

character in all respects, must be sufficient to remove all skepticism as to their divine character from any candid and reasoning mind.

We select from the multitude of prophecies, as test examples, two classes: those which relate to the person and mission of Jesus Christ, and a few of those which relate to the Jewish nation especially, and a specimen number which relate to other nations and kingdoms. These latter are selected because their fulfillment is now before our eyes and cannot be gainsaid. They are clearly matters which could only be known to man by supernatural communication. Those which relate to Christ—the so-called Messianic prophecies—are pre-eminently of this kind. They are concerning a person who was to be born into the world whose character and mission were to be unique. We shall undertake to show that his entire character, history, and mission were minutely delineated ages before his appearance; so minutely that a change of the *tense* in the writings of the prophets would convert it, substantially, into a recital of the actual history. We will arrange the grouping, so as to show, in the order named, those which determine his genealogy, the time when he should appear, the place where he should appear, the unusual circumstances attending his appearance, the events of his life, including his own manner of living and working and the conduct of men toward him, his singular death and resurrection, and the effect of his coming on his own and after ages. We shall be able to show a series of predictions of the most wonderful character, which it is *impossible* should have been delivered except by the dictation of a mind which has perfect knowledge of the future.

Perhaps before we commence to unfold this wonderful revelation we ought to stay a moment to reflect on the reason of this altogether strange and remarkable phenomenon. Why

was this particular man selected from among all men to be so distinguished? Most important is it that we should carry the

Reasons for the answer to that question with us in our examination.
 prophecies concerning Christ. It explains the mystery of the whole. We give the reasons furnished by the book itself.

Man, it asserts, had become estranged from God, and under the guilt of sin. Of the truth of this we are all sadly conscious witnesses. It was in the heart of God to reclaim and restore him. Can we doubt it? To do that he must communicate with him. Man was ignorant and wanted light; was alienated and wanted attraction; was degenerate and wanted inward help. This, again, we painfully know to be true. God determined to send his Son in the likeness of human flesh to be the Redeemer of the race. Was it not what we would expect of our heavenly Father? To accomplish the object he must prepare a scheme that would be effectual, would meet the condition of the fallen child; a scheme supported by ample proof for his reason, suitable motive for his affections, needful help for his want, as well as a scheme for the maintenance of that rightful authority without which even His mercy would be despised and powerless of good. He would send his Son; but he must first promise and afterward fulfill. He would inspire hope, and prepare the means of its accomplishment. Herein is the reason why the prophets spoke of him as "they were moved by the Holy Ghost." He was to be, as he is, the Saviour of the world. Thus regarded, the wonder that ages should be given to the preparation for his coming—that prophets should write of him—that all circumstances should conspire to augment the desire of his appearance—that it should be attended with wonders and supernatural tokens, ceases. It is what the case requires, since it is the appearing of the Son of God among men. We are free to confess that without this explanation the difficulties of faith would be insurmountable. But with a purpose to save our race, we

see nothing strange in the method. How he could attract us but by some such manifestation we cannot conceive. Prophecy was the necessary means for introducing and attesting the divine method.

Infinite wisdom saw best that the preparatory dispensation should be long. He would send his Son, but not for four thousand years. Does that seem hard? Not if these years were necessary for the preparation; not if, Preparatory dispensation long. meantime, he came by other servants with promises, which were saving to those who received them; not if by this means he could best accomplish his benevolent purpose for the world. This one thing we shall find: that it was by means of that delay that we and all after ages are able to receive and enter into the redemption. These prophecies, which were the promises on which his people built their hopes and which gilded the night of their time, are the foundations, now that they are fulfilled, on which we build our faith. They were given that the people might believe in a Saviour to come, and that, believing, they might be saved. They were written that, being fulfilled, we might believe in a Saviour that has come, and that, believing, we might be saved. These are the reasons. What are the facts?

PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST.

First, we are to give attention to the prophecies touching his genealogy. This leads us, with altogether unpremeditated appositeness, strangely enough, to the first prophecy ever uttered. It was delivered by God himself in the garden of Eden; its record was made by Moses. The oldest prophecy. Whether Moses received it by immediate inspiration or by transmission—as indeed so of the whole account of creation—is a matter of no consequence, since the event shows that God

was the original source. It is that marvelous prophecy contained in the judgment upon the tempter, and which has in it the germ of the substance of the whole Gospel: "Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." The light which after revelations throw upon this passage determines its Messianic character. It contained the promise of a deliverer who should be of the *woman's* seed—an unquestionable reference to the superhuman generation of the Son of God in the womb of a virgin, by the overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, which prophecy was repeated by Isaiah more than three thousand years afterward: "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The passages equally show that he was to be human born, and not of some other race, but of extraordinary generation. We shall have occasion to refer to each of these passages again. The single point to which we direct attention now is, that he was to appear in flesh. This it must be obvious, though extremely indefinite, is nevertheless definite in the essential point that He that was to come was to be a *man*, not an *angel*. The prophecy served the two purposes of all prophecy: it announced a truth and furnished a test.

There can be no doubt that a useful and sufficient religious cultus was immediately established, and enriched with revelations which have not descended to us, and which were adapted to the beginnings of a spiritual development on earth. There is evidence of the institution of sacrifice. Its significance must have been understood. Enoch was a preacher of righteousness, who walked with God. Noah received revelations. But almost nothing reaches us from that

A religious cultus established.

remote age but an account of the growing wickedness of men, which culminated in a fearful judgment of Jehovah that swept them off the face of the earth, one family excepted. Subsequent to the flood we have an account of God's dealings with the new race which began to repopulate the world, but no direct allusion is made to the promise of Eden until the time of Abraham.

It was not so important that the divine promise should be reiterated, if clearly understood, as that it should be suitably guarded so as to prevent fraud. The prophecies must be sufficiently numerous and minute to make the fulfillment clear and distinct.

Two thousand years passed; the new race began to be numerous, and to spread abroad over the face of the earth. To guard old revelations and provide for new ones God saw it wise to select one family, discerned by infinite prescience as the best adapted to his purposes, to whom to commit the revelation and to whom to fulfill the promises. The Redeemer must spring of some line—God chose the Abrahamic. It cannot be pretended that this implies partiality, since some one line must be chosen, and since the blessing was to be universal. He found in Chaldea a man, Abraham, in whom were elements of probity, and he particularized to him the promise of Eden in these words: “I will make The covenant with Abraham. of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: . . . and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. . . . And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.” Gen. xii, 2, 3; xxii, 18. This promise is clear and explicit. It excludes none from blessing through the promised seed, but all but the Abrahamic line from the possibility of his descent from them. At the time when Abraham was selected he was seventy-five years of age and was childless. He was required to depart

from his own land and kindred unto a land which should be shown him, an unknown country, which was promised to his posterity for an inheritance. Despairing of seed by Sarah, and moved by her instigation, he became father of a son by Hagar, her maid-servant. It was not until thirteen years later that Sarah, in her old age, became a mother. The son of Hagar he called Ishmael, and the son of Sarah he called Isaac. It was in the purpose of God that both these sons should become distinguished, but in different ways. They were both to be heads of nations of marked contrasts, and most dissimilar history. Of Ishmael God said: "He will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. . . . And he grew, and dwelt in the wilderness, and became an archer." Gen. xvi, 12; xxi, 20. Could there be a more truthful description of his descendants, the nomadic Arabs? But to Isaac God said: "I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father; and I will make thy seed to multiply as the stars of heaven, and will give unto thy seed all these countries. And in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxvi, 3, 4.

The covenant
renewed to
Isaac and to
Jacob.

This fixes the promise to Isaac and his seed, and eliminates from the succession the descendants of Ishmael; showing the care with which the important matter is guarded. Isaac also had two sons, and these again were important persons, Esau and Jacob. Esau was first-born, and the promise would naturally descend to him, but it did not. He married a descendant of Ishmael, and became the source of the Edomites. The Edomites, like the Ishmaelites, were rejected. But God said to Jacob: "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac [thy God]: the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; and thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth; and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north,

and to the south : and in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." Gen. xxviii, 13, 14. Thus the promise was renewed in Jacob and his line.

Jacob, it will be remembered, married two wives, sisters, Rachel and Leah, the daughters of Laban, who was nephew to his mother. By these, and their two maids, who became his secondary wives, he had twelve sons : by Leah, Reuben and Simeon and Levi and Judah and Issachar and Zebulon, and two sons were given to Leah by her handmaid, Gad and Asher—in all eight. Rachel was more beloved than Leah, but she was barren. Two sons were given her by her maid, Dan and Naphtali ; and God had pity on Rachel, and she finally became mother of two sons, Joseph and Benjamin. These sons were to be joint heads of a great and united nation, but each to be head of a tribe that should bear his name, and each tribe was to have a distinct fortune of its own, as well as distinct characteristics. To which of the tribes should the promise descend? It would tend to confusion to leave it in uncertainty. We would naturally suppose that it would go by primogeniture to Reuben, first-born of Leah ; or if not, to Joseph, first-born of the beloved Rachel. But in fact it was not for either. The story of Jacob's descent into Egypt is familiar. Joseph had preceded him, and had become great in the land. Jacob brought with him all his sons and their wives and their children, in all "threescore and six" souls, besides Joseph and his family, four in number. He was given a place in Goshen, and dwelt there until he died. His death-scene is the most remarkable on record. He assembled his sons about him to receive his dying blessing, and pronounced upon them those wonderful prophecies concerning each which found such fulfillment in their after history. The two sons of Joseph were accounted as separate tribes, and that of Levi dropped from the list, and taken as the Lord's

The death of
Jacob.

special inheritance and given the priesthood. When Jacob's hands were placed on the head of Judah, the fourth son of Leah—the most renowned of them all—he uttered the memorable words which pointed out the Messianic line: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. xlix, 10. The vision still looked down a vista of nearly seventeen hundred years; at the end of that time Shiloh, the prince of peace, the promised seed, was to come of Judah's line. Two hundred years of slavery followed this, during which there is no sign. Then came Moses and the forty years of unbroken miracle, and then followed the four hundred years of the Judges and of Saul, years crowded with wonders. And at the end of that time once more God narrowed the line, and selected the family of Jesse, of the tribe of Judah, and put that scepter which the dying Jacob saw seven hundred years before into the hand of David, Jesse's youngest son. And so it became known

The promise to David's line.

that He that was to come was to be of David's line, and ever afterward he was spoken of as the offspring of David. Three hundred years afterward, but still more than seven hundred years before its fulfillment, Isaiah wrote: "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. . . . There shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and his rest shall be glorious." Isa. xi, 1-10. And Jeremiah, still a hundred years later, said: "I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. . . . And this is his name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS." Jer. xxiii, 5, 6. Thus, beginning with the general promise in Eden,₃ we have a golden genealogical thread reaching along the

ages for thirty-four hundred years, connecting Eve with Abraham, then Isaac, then Jacob, then Judah, then Jesse, then David, and, after David, David's line. It is now definite as to family. The chances of fraud are as narrow as possible.

The next strand we notice is the prophecies which relate to time. If now, having found the household from which He is to come, we can find the time when he will ^{Prophecies which fix the} make his appearance, our astonishment cannot fail ^{time.} to be heightened. Time is not with God as it is with us. With him a thousand years are as one day. He is in no haste. He may take millions of years to fit up a house for his human child. So, in planting his divine kingdom, generations may come and go ere its corner-stone is laid; may come and go that, when it is laid, it shall be moved no more for ever. Not an intimation as to the time of the fulfillment of his promise is given for twenty-three hundred years, and then it is a riddle; but not so seventeen hundred years later, when it reaches its fulfillment. He has not forgotten or forsaken the race meantime. He is sending messengers, he is working wonders, he is showing the nations that he is God, he is preparing for the event of all events; but his first hint of the time when all shall be completed is in those words of the dying Jacob, already quoted: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, *until* Shiloh come."

Once more look at the wonderfulness of this utterance of the dying patriarch. What a vision was that which unrolled itself to his view. When the words were spoken ^{Time fixed by} Judah had no scepter. All told, there were but a ^{Jacob.} few score of the entire race. They were strangers and captives in another land. The words seem like the wandering dreams of a mind over which the films of death are gathering; but

it is not so. The dying prophet is looking down the centuries, and more than six hundred years hence he sees his seed enlarged into a foremost nation of the world; they have become a kingdom; Judah's line receives the badge of royalty; in his hand he sees a scepter; on down the ages he descries wars and overturning of kingdoms, but Judah maintains his place and power though more than once temporarily worsted; it is sixteen hundred and more years away when he sees Shiloh, the matchless prince, enter the field of vision; then Judah's scepter drops from his hand. He sums up the vision in a sentence: "The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." It is obvious that in the vision the two events are connected; the one is placed just before the other; they are in the field of vision at the same time. No one can tell when it will be, but the events will come in a pair at about the same time, and the occurrence of the one will determine the presence of the other. Thus the prediction becomes absolutely specific as to time.

However seemingly indefinite in fact, the prophecy is perfectly definite as to time; the fulfillment of the promise must be before but nearly contemporaneous with another conspicuous event, which determines its precise place. It is as if a prophet living fifteen hundred years ago had written, "There shall rise a great republic in the West, and it shall enslave men until a number of the States shall revolt and institute civil war." The latter event determines the proximate antecedence of the former. Not another intimation of time is given for the space of a thousand years. Meantime the prophets are full of the event itself. That is never lost sight of. Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and Daniel, and Micah, and some others are full of it. It becomes the hope and longing of the nation. All eyes and hearts are turned with eager expectancy to the great event, but no word is

3

spoken of the time until Daniel, the seer of the captivity, unrolls his marvelous visions. It is yet in the future five hundred years. First comes his vision of the image and of the stone which smites it, in which Time fixed by Daniel. occur the words following: "In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure." Dan. ii, 44, 45. We shall have other use for this prophecy, but what we call attention to now is, that it fixes the time of the event of all time; it is to be in the days of these kings, when the kingdoms of the image have appeared.

The date again is determined by events; but now we have other events which are to concur in denoting the time, and the chances of misinterpretation are lessened. The scepter of Judah must depart and the kingdoms be smitten by the stone at the same time. They are disconnected events, but the vision brings them into co-existence. They are two ushers of the coming Messiah. Months pass, and this prophet makes another deliverance. Nebuchadnezzar is gathered to his fathers, and Belshazzar his son reigns in his stead; he passes away and Darius succeeds to the throne. During the reign of Belshazzar Daniel's visions continued, but they were visions of the rise and fall of earthly empires and their relation to the kingdom of the stone; but during the reign of Darius came a revelation of marked significance, touching the point in hand. The prophet is minute in stating the circumstances

under which he received this revelation. He prefaces by declaring that he knew from the writings of the prophet Jeremiah that the years of the captivity were about accomplished. Jeremiah had said: "These nations shall serve the king of Babylon seventy years. And it shall come to pass, when seventy years are accomplished, that I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord." Jer. xxv, 11, 12. Knowing that the time was nearing its accomplishment, he, Daniel, betook himself to prayer. His pleadings and confessions are given. So far as appears, one thing only was in his mind; the restoration of the city and temple of God, which were desolate, and the return of his captive countrymen to their own land. "And while I was speaking," he says, "and praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people Israel, and presenting my supplication before the Lord my God for the holy mountain of my God; yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in the vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation. And he informed me, and talked with me, and said, O Daniel, I am now come forth to give thee skill and understanding. At the beginning of thy supplications the commandment came forth, and I am come to show thee; for thou art greatly beloved: therefore understand the matter, and consider the vision. Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy. Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem, unto the Messiah the Prince, shall be seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times.

And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." Dan. ix, 20-27.

Of this most wonderful prophecy there has never been a doubt as to its Messianic character. Remoteness casts some obscurity over parts of it, but in the main it is as clear as it is explicit. It establishes the time of the coming of Messiah from a given fact, namely, the command to restore and build Jerusalem, from which until Messiah shall be cut off should be seventy weeks (prophetic weeks), or four hundred and ninety years. Now there were, as we find in Ezra, three decrees, issued at different times, which seem to relate to the same event, but which in fact differ in their substance. First was the decree of Cyrus, issued in 536 B. C. The captivity began in 589; this, therefore, was issued about sixteen years before the seventy years of captivity predicted by Jeremiah had closed. It is noticeable that it authorized the rebuilding of the temple, but not the rebuilding of the city, or the return of the tribes. This was followed on the part of a few volunteer pilgrims with a feeble attempt to rebuild, but was soon remitted because of the opposition of the Samaritans. After an interval of sixteen years, and at the end of the seventy years, a second decree was issued by Darius, who had succeeded Cyrus, renewing the former decree, and under this the work proceeded with varied fortunes, and many captives returned to their land. In 515 B. C. the temple was opened

but not completed, and still most of the captives lingered in Babylon, and the land was practically uninhabited. Some gathered to the ancient city and commenced to rebuild it. The reign of Ahasuerus, which intervened between that of Darius and Artaxerxes, and an account of which is given by Esther, is not given by Ezra. He wrote simply of the matters which touched the return from captivity, and during the reign of Ahasuerus nothing was done on their behalf. Artaxerxes was now on the throne. The attempt to rebuild the city was complained of, and they were restrained by Artaxerxes, showing that this was not the import of the previous decrees. Ezra iv, 7, 24. This is a most important account. It shows how the efforts to rebuild the temple itself were made void during the reigns of Cyrus, Darius, and Ahasuerus, his successor, and now again under Artaxerxes. The fourth chapter is a *résumé* of what is detailed in chapters following. The land remained desolate and unbuilt until this same Artaxerxes Longimanus renewed and enlarged the decree made by Cyrus and Darius. This decree was made at the instance of Ezra and Nehemiah, who were commissioned to gather their countrymen and rebuild their city and establish their government (Ezra vii to the end, and Nehemiah).* That this was the decree referred to by Daniel there can be no doubt. Indeed, properly all the preceding decrees were tentative and preliminary. This completes them and gives them efficacy. This decree was issued in the month Nisan, 457 B. C.; to which, if we add the thirty-three years of his human life, we have the four hundred and ninety years of Daniel, to the month.

Yet once more we have a prophecy respecting the time; it is the prophecy of Haggai. He exercised his office during and at the close of the captivity, immediately subsequent

* For an exhaustive examination of this prophecy of Daniel, see Strong's "Cyclopedia," article, *Seventy Weeks*. Also Note E.

to Daniel; possibly was among the few captives who returned under the decree of Cyrus, and may have assisted in the first attempt to rebuild the temple, and was certainly present at and encouraging to the work under the decree of Darius. The Spirit of the Lord came upon him, and beyond the building he saw the spiritual temple which it typified, and the glorious kingdom of Messiah rising and filling the earth, and connected the two together. The house should be built, and though inferior in pomp it should excel in glory: "For thus saith the Lord of hosts; Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land. And I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Hag. ii, 6-9.

This prophecy, like each of the preceding, is perfectly definite and unequivocal. That it is Messianic is not disputed. It fixes the time of Messiah's coming, and the opening of his ministry thirty years later, during the existence of the temple then being built, and by fair construction, as in the case of Jacob's prophecy, connects it with the closing period of its existence.

Once more. Touching the time, we have the prophecy of Malachi: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." Now, here are five distinct prophecies with respect to the time when Messiah should appear on earth. It is impossible to construe them as referring to any other event; the *consensus* of both the

Date fixed by
Haggai.

Date fixed by
Malachi.

Jewish and Christian Churches has from the first so construed them. The first was, beyond dispute, delivered seventeen hundred years before the event; the second, third, and fourth were more than five hundred and thirty years, and the fifth about four hundred years before the fulfillment. The first determined the time by its immediate antecedence to the overthrow of the Jewish state; the second, by its occurrence during the final cast of the kingdoms, in Nebuchadnezzar's image; the third, by placing it four hundred and fifty-seven years after the decree to rebuild the holy city; the fourth, by fixing it while the second temple was yet in existence; the fifth and final, by ushering it in by the ministry of John the Baptist. These several events have no connection with each other whatever. There is no connectional ground for their existence. Like the event of the incarnation itself, they were all future, and the causes of them non-existent at the time of the prediction. That any of them should occur was what no unaided mind could know; but that in the far-off ages they should concur at the same time with another event is a mystery of knowledge which only the Infinite could possibly possess. Each prophet saw two concurring events; the entire group comprises six; one determines the date of all: the event was a complete and perfect fulfillment.

We come next to consider the prophecy concerning the place of Christ's birth. Constructively, that would have been determined without specific mention, as likely to be in the tribal district of Judah, and in the neighborhood of David's town. But the Infinite saw it best to make it perfectly definite, and accordingly he inspired his servant Micah, seven hundred and fifty years before the event, to write these words, the Messianic character of which is determined by New Testament authority, and which has never been disputed: "But thou, Bethlehem

Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Micah v, 2. Bethlehem was the shire town of the family of David, built on the very fields where David led the herds of his father Jesse to pasture; popularly known as David's town.

The general condition of the world and some specific circumstances were also made subject of prophecy, as attending or co-etaneous with the coming of Messiah. It was to follow a great and noted upheaval of the nations: "Behold, I will shake all nations." It was to be matter of common expectation: "And the Desire of all nations shall come." A star was to appear to indicate his birth: "I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob."

Thus we have been able to find four converging but wholly independent lines of prophecy, like so many golden threads coming down from the remote ages and terminating on one point—lines clearly defined and unbroken: first, a line clearly marking his genealogy, fixing the very household, among all the families of the world, *where* Messiah should be born; second, a line fixing the precise time, to a year, *when* he should be born; third, a line pointing to the exact town *in which* he should be born; fourth, a line delineating the circumstances of the age when the wonderful event should take place. That these things are so is beyond dispute. There they stand in the prophetic writings to-day, open to the inspection of all. The power of the argument is in its aggregate elements. One prophecy fulfilled has force, but it might be attributed to possible accident—a happy guess. But when the prophetic deliverances are numerous—from numerous sources, and diverse in subject

The power of the argument in its aggregate elements.

matter—when they are minute and of multiform elements—that there should be no failure in any particular, nothing of the prediction contradicted by the fact, nothing unfulfilled, this we are certain can never be explained on any other hypothesis than that of supernatural revelation. No ingenuity can escape the force of the argument here presented. The long antecedence of the prediction is established by indisputable proofs; their contents are such as could not be conjectured by natural reason; they are perfectly clear, and various, and minute; the fulfillment is complete. Not a single prophecy touching this subject can be pointed out that is not fulfilled. The face in the history answers to the face in the portraiture of prophecy. The Christ of the New Testament is the Messiah of the Old. In the fullness of time he comes to the expectant world.

Let any one reflect on these marvelous facts, and answer to himself the question how they are to be explained on any other theory than that which is laid down in the holy book itself—namely, that the utterances were divinely inspired; or, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews affirms, that God “at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets.” Heb. i, 1. Or, as Peter puts it, “For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Pet. i, 21.

Beginning with Moses, who undoubtedly wrote the most ancient scripture books (the Pentateuch) at least fifteen hundred years before the incarnation, we have found interspersed all the way through, down to Malachi, who closes up the canon four hundred years before the event, these marvelous predictions of a Messiah to come.

Had the predictions simply been of a Messiah, leaving the term in vague indefiniteness, to be applied to some remarkable personage who might appear sometime in some place, they

might have been classed as simply analogous to similar deliverances made by heathen oracles, but we have seen that this is not the case; no such explanation is possible.

The personage announced under the name Messiah is in all respects to be a unique personage. This point will now engage our attention. It was important that it should be ^{Messiah a unique person-} known in what nationality he should appear; in ^{age.} what tribal fraction; in what distinct family. This, we have seen, was traced with the greatest care and utmost minuteness; no chance was left for mistake or doubt. It was important, to prevent any possible danger of deception, that it should be clear at what time he should appear. This, we have seen, was determined with the utmost precision, not simply to the century, but, circumstantially, to the precise time. Again there was no room left for uncertainty or doubt. It was important, also, that the place should be at least proximately fixed. Again there is nothing equivocal; the very town is named.

The books in which the predictions are contained are the revered books of the nation; containing its laws and ordinances, and the history of its life and institutions and customs from its founding. By a statute most sacredly held and observed, it was required to be taught to the children from generation to generation. The promise of the Shiloh, the Messiah, the great national Saviour, through whom were to come deliverance and peace and the greatest possible blessings, was held as the holiest treasure, the hope of Israel, the event of all events, to which they were ever looking forward. As the time approached each succeeding generation became more anxiously expectant.

The time finally came. The advent was proclaimed. In Bethlehem a child was born, and it was declared that he was the long-heralded, long-awaited-for Messiah. There was no room for doubt that the Pretender met the three or four conditions

already pointed out. He was in the right family; he was at the right time; he was in the right place; he was at the right juncture of circumstances. If the promises were ever to be fulfilled it must be here and now. The converging lines of prophecy have met.

Is he the predicted Messiah? It was necessary that he should stand a yet severer test. The birth of a man-child in Bethlehem at that juncture was required to the fulfillment of prophecy, but it was not sufficient. The severer test. A fraud was still possible. True, the conjunction of events, as found in the prophetic cast, was sufficient to show that the prophets must have been under inspiration; but to make good the claim of the Pretender to the Messiahship more was necessary.

He who was conducting the scheme well understood this. To prevent any possible collusion it was necessary that the character of the promised Messiah should be portrayed, and that it should be so peculiar as to defy counterfeit. Accordingly, the Messiah was to be a unique character—stranger than any that ever appeared in fiction—"the Wonderful" of all the ages. He must bear this strain also.

It might have been safe to announce him simply as Wonderful, leaving the term in vagueness; it would have been a great risk to create expectations of such an appearance, even; but there might possibly have been a birth at the time and place that would have made a sufficiently plausible approach to meet the demands of the guess.

But the case is not that. It was not some vague "Wonderful." These same prophets who had ventured to announce that a great personage would sometime appear in the world who would be a Messiah, had gone further, and ventured to predict of what nation, tribe, and individual family he would come; had gone still further, and declared circumstantially in what

century he would make his appearance, not indeed by giving the year and date, but by pointing out a conjunction of events that determined the time; they had gone still further with their venture, and foretold the country and very town in which he would be born; had ventured, yet further, to delineate his character and all the events of his life—this was the greatest strain of all. But even more than this was their venture. Had they simply depicted a man there might have been some possible chance for a successful guess. There are general resemblances in the characters of men—tribal and hereditary traits. There are common features in the lives and circumstances of all men, to which any man will bear a remote likeness. An observant and wise student of mankind might delineate a character of the common type to which almost any man of a given nationality might bear a likeness.

But now comes the strange marvel. These prophets were interspersed through ages. They did not know each other. No one of them ventured to describe or predict the general features even of the Messiah whom they predicted. Each one declared something—an event, a feature, a circumstance, or hinted incidentally a saying, a deed. It was necessary that these atomic parts should form a composite whole—a blended unity and harmony in one possible character. When gathered together these fractions must make a whole—a biography perfect and complete of a being who has no analogy in all time, and never can have; and the Messiah is to be the hero who fills out this wondrous sketch.

Let us attend to these strange and even startling facts. It is not a difficult task to bring out the prophetic delineation. We have the original with which to compare it. The likeness is found to be perfect. The portrait drawn in the ancient books answers to the original in the new, “as face answers to face in

a glass." There never was another character in all time that has borne any resemblance whatever to this portrait. The original is not only unique, but transcendent, superhuman, divine. So the prophets ventured to paint him; so the historian declares him; so the ages award him. It has been well said that it is not in the power of man even now, with the advantage of the growth of ages, and after they have had the archetype depicted, either to invent such a hero or suggest an improvement to the wonderful prototype; much less would it be possible that there should be imagined an original to answer to it. Yet these prophets of old had the boldness to proclaim that at a time and place in the march of the ages he would become real. And history declares that in Jesus of Nazareth the world has the original.

It is an acknowledged fact that at the time of Christ's advent there was a universal expectation of the Messiah. The signals of fulfillment. prophecy of Daniel was well known, and the Jews believed that the four hundred and ninety years, completed, would bring the fulfillment. They were literally waiting for the important event. Other nations had already become seized of a similar expectation. Pretenders were appearing on every hand, deceiving many. The scepter which had been trembling in Judah's hand was about to depart; the temple yet stood, but its destruction was in the near future; all things were ready. Augustus meditates the overthrow of the Jewish state. It will be too late then. God's word abideth forever. Up through the far-away depths of ether an angel, with the speed of a celestial messenger on business of state, is seen making his way among the stars toward our world. His objective point is Nazareth. He is sent to a Jewish maiden, to announce the startling wonder that she is to be mother of a superhuman child, whose name shall be called Jesus. Thus the scene of fulfillment opens;

it is the first signal of the coming King. Months pass. One month, and the four hundred and fifty-seven years will close. The decree of Augustus is issued; it is the second signal. The herald summons the people to their tribal towns to record their names under the Roman taxing. There remains but the fraction of a month. Mary and Joseph start for Bethlehem; it is the third signal. The time is at hand; in a day or two the Babe will be in the manger. The temple will stand till he shall become old enough to enter upon his office. Thirty years pass; there is a cry of one in the wilderness of Judea, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." It is the cry of the herald, John Baptist. Thus all the predictions find their complete fulfillment in Him who comes as Redeemer and Prince.

But these prophecies, wonderful as they are, are neither the only ones nor even the most remarkable. The person whose birth they so circumstantially announced was not simply an ordinary personage. He was to be distinguished by the most A unique person. extraordinary characteristics of person and history — perfectly unique and *sui generis* in every respect from the beginning to the end of his career. He was to stand alone in all history. They ventured upon the marvelous delineation of such an exceptional character, often involving apparent contradictions, but in the event fulfilled to the letter. His mother was to be a virgin. Two prophets staked their reputation upon that venture; a seeming impossibility. So *outré* and improbable a thing could not have entered the imagination but by inspiration. He was to be born in Bethlehem, but to be a Nazarene, and to be called out of Egypt. His name was to be called Immanuel, "God with us" — a prophecy of his wonderful character and his possession of the very Godhead itself. He was to be thus a God-man. He was to be a great teacher. He was to preach spiritual doctrines—the acceptable

year of the Lord, and the opening of the prison doors to them that were bound. He was to have more wisdom than any man—to be the Light of the world. He was to be a great miracle-worker, to give sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, and feet to the lame. He was to be hailed with hosannas as King—the very manner of his triumphal entry into Jerusalem was described. He was to be rejected by those who anxiously awaited his coming. He was to be betrayed and sold for thirty pieces of silver. He was to be condemned as a malefactor and unbefriended in his trial, and also to submit without self-defense. He was to be crucified, but not a bone of him was to be broken, while his body was to be pierced. He was to die, not for his own sins, but for the sins of others. He was to rise again from the dead and ascend to heaven. These and many other particulars of his unique and wonderful life were pointed out centuries before his appearance on earth. Despite his rejection and crucifixion, he was yet to establish an imperishable kingdom among men; his name was to become famous throughout the world; Gentiles were to come to his light and kings to the brightness of his rising; he was to be lifted up, and all men were to be gathered to him; in a word, every marked feature of his personal character and work was delineated with clearness and fullness. Who can pretend to account for these facts on any other principle than that these men were peculiarly empowered? The facts cannot be denied. It is impossible to explain the coincidence of the predictions and history on the principle of happy accident or fraud. Had the foretellings been confined to the events of a common-place life, or had they been obscure or enigmatical, they might be attributed to ingenious surmising; but when they constitute a chain of perfectly unique events and traits such as to be a solitary exception in the world's history—a series of consecutive wonders making up the web of an entire life, how could

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any imagination ever have woven such a dream, and how could it ever have become real? To suppose the thing possible is impossible to sane reason. There is but one remaining alternative. This marvelous incarnation was a messenger from heaven. These holy men were inspired of God to foretell his advent, and so to furnish the adequate proofs of his mission. The testimony in the case is not their testimony, but the testimony of God that we may believe.*

Read Appendix, Note C. We have taken it bodily from Keith's "Demonstration of the Truth of Christianity." It presents substantially all the Messianic prophecies in parallel columns with the New Testament records of the fulfillment in the most condensed form. Read the answering passages, and remember as you read that there is not one of the passages from the prophetic books that was not written more than four hundred years before the fulfilling event. This statement is not conjectural but absolute certainty. There is no possibility of invalidating the position.

What we now allege is, that the fulfilled predictions above recited are demonstration. We use the word in the strongest sense, and we are willing to stake the claims of the Bible and of Christianity on the issue; namely, that it is not merely probably true that supernatural agency was employed in the predictions, but that it is impossible that it should have been otherwise; as impossible as that two and two should make five, or that the whole should be greater or less than all its parts, or that things that are equal to the same thing should not be equal to each other, or that there should be effect without cause. God alone could be the author.

The argument is not new. The challenge has been before the world for eighteen hundred years. The ancient skeptics

* See Appendix, Note C.

were not able to meet it. Modern infidelity is dumb before it. It cannot be met. It is God's own witness to the divinity of his own word. Here we stand and defy our enemies. Until they can make it appear that man is capable of foreseeing innumerable concurring contingent events, which could have had no indications at the time when the predictors lived and wrote, these facts and fulfillments must show some other than the human mind in the authorship of the sacred books.

If the argument here presented be a fallacy it ought not to be difficult to point out where the fallacious element is. There is no obscurity in the plan of the argument. There are no parts of it difficult of understanding or equivocal. It is in no way involved or complicated. It is the simplest form of syllogism. The human mind has no power to foresee contingent events. The Bible was indited by a mind which did foresee contingent events. Therefore the Bible was not of human production. Let the skeptic try his hand on either of the premises, and he will find that they are as immovable as the axioms of mathematics. Let him grapple with the conclusion; he will find it as stubborn as each of the premises.

There is absolutely no rational alternative left. The Messianic prophecies establish two supernatural features of Christianity beyond the possibility of successful contradiction; namely, that in the Bible God directly communicates a knowledge of facts to man which could be known in no other way, thus proving it to be a supernatural revelation. The fact is of infinite significance. It forever, when fully grasped, closes the question as to the divine origin of Christianity. It settles the point as to the authority of the sacred volume. It leaves infidelity as irrational as it is impious. But, second, they establish the supernatural character of Christ as a messenger from heaven. On this rock the Church is built, and the gates of hell can never prevail against it.

3

PROPHECIES WITH RESPECT TO NATIONS.

But turning now from these prophecies concerning Messiah which we have seen to be so wonderful and inexplicable, yea, impossible of interpretation except as inspired of God, we ask attention to another class not less wonderful and still more numerous, and, as we shall see, just as certainly proving the direct agency of God in their deliverance. We refer now to the prophecies with respect to kingdoms, countries, cities, and peoples; markedly, with respect to the land of Judea and the Jewish people and the city of Jerusalem, and also prophecies with respect to other lands and peoples, as Edom, or Idumea, Ammon, Philistia, Moab, Egypt, Nineveh, Babylon, Arabia, and other lands and peoples.*

A few of these we will take up for special examination, but before doing so we ask attention to several things important to be observed and kept in mind in this discussion:

First: That the spirit of prophecy is peculiar to the Bible. No well accredited prophecy is found in any other book or even oral tradition now extant, or that has ever been extant in the world. The oracles of heathen-
Spirit of prophecy peculiar to the Bible.
 ism are not to be classed as an exception. There is not a single one of them that meets the tests required to prove supernatural agency, which every scripture prophecy evinces. So far as we have been able to find there is no exception to this sweeping remark.

* For the extent of these prophetic deliverances we request the reader to turn at once to the careful study of Note D. Here at a glance he will find prophecy and fulfillment collated in parallel columns, and I am sure will be amazed at the result. The note is transferred from Keith's invaluable treatise, "Demonstration of the Truth of Christianity." I prefer to give it as furnished rather than to mar the effect by a recast. See also the volume itself, and his more recent volume on the Prophecies.

Second: The spirit of prophecy is pervasive of the Bible. It is not a rare or exceptional thing, but is so common as to be practically universal—found in every book, and touching almost all events in the on-movement of the race.

Third: Scripture prophecy is minute, descending to particulars, and unequivocal in its language and application.

Fourth: It relates to events often lying in the then distant, in some cases still far distant, future which at the time of the utterance no existing circumstance could have suggested; in some cases relating to things which were not yet themselves in existence when the prediction was made concerning them. The then non-existent was made the subject of the prediction.

Fifth: The prophecies now to be examined have this peculiarity, that while the record dates back thousands of years, and is known to have circulated through all that period of time among men, the fulfillment is now before our eyes, and in some cases actually at this moment taking place. Thus the proof of inspiration is not only now visible, but the miracle is now progressing. The argument from prophecy is thus not only seen to be complete and irresistible, but it is cumulative and increasing in volume.

If these things are so, and we shall proceed to prove that they are, there is no room left for the unreasonable doubt which is often thrown over other portions of prophecy remaining to be fulfilled. In this case we have the proof before our eyes that prophecy, though impossible to man, is characteristic of the holy volume, and therefore is not impossible to God. In the case of Messianic prophecy just examined we have similar prophecies which transpired ages ago, the proof of which is not now ocular but historical, but none the less credible.

Sixth: If there were in the Holy Book but one unmistakable and absolutely certain prophecy it would suffice to establish forever a supernatural prescience; the proof would be positive

and unanswerable, since for that one prophecy the human mind could not account. The entire absence of this element in every other book demonstrates their human origin, or leaves it impossible to show with absolute certainty that they are not of simply human origin. Their presence in this volume lifts it above every other. But if one prophecy is sufficient, how much more the pervasive fact! The presence of supernatural agency is thus shown to be not occasional, or in limited and uncertain measure, but constant and unintermittent, at least to such a measure as to show the authorship to be the same throughout. Each prophecy is a demonstration. The demonstration is repeated every time of a fulfilled prophecy. It becomes absolutely demonstration upon demonstration.

Seventh: The argument gathers still augmented force from the fact that among all the numerous prophecies not one can be shown to have failed. If a single one stood the test it would render the proof invincible; but how much more so, when the one is multiplied to hundreds, and not one fails to stand the test!

Eighth: The argument gathers yet increased augmentation of force when the events predicted are in themselves events out of the ordinary course, and matters in themselves highly improbable; not only not naturally to be expected, but the very opposite of what observation and experience would suggest, and in many cases what seemed not merely unlikely, but under the circumstances impossible.

Ninth: It is yet another element of augmenting force to the argument from prophecy that the desire to penetrate the future is natural and universal to man. The total absence of this power in all cases, save in the line of the seers and prophets who appear in the sacred books of the Jews and Christians, is proof of the impossibility except when it is divinely conferred, and supports the claim set up by these seers that they

were so aided. The proof is irresistible that the prophetic spirit is supernatural.

The reader has been referred to Note D in the Appendix, and has perhaps informed himself of the vast scope of prophecies of the class now under examination. The arrangement of prediction and fulfillment is so perfect as to leave nothing to be desired, unless, it may be, to call more specific attention to a selection of a few of the most remarkable of these prophecies for more careful study.

I select first a prediction with respect to the Jewish nation. The passage which initiates the prophecy—for, as we shall see, Prophecy concerning the Jews. it repeats itself at intervals by different prophets—is found in Deuteronomy xxviii, and was delivered by Moses 1450 years before the Christian era, and its fulfillment is matter of open vision to-day. That it was of the authorship ascribed, and as early as the date mentioned, cannot be successfully disputed. The prophecy here cited is part of his farewell address, delivered on the eve of his departure from the people whom he had delivered from bondage, and of his departure from the earth. He had brought them from the bondage of Egypt by the marvels which he wrought before Pharaoh under the commission of God. He had led them through the wilderness for nearly forty years of continuous miracle. He had received the law from heaven in the mount which flamed with the visible tokens of Jehovah's presence among them. Worn with the burdens of age and care, he was now about to leave them. They had reached the Jordan, just beyond which was the land given to Abraham their father, and they were ready to cross and take possession of it. He had been notified by God that he would not be permitted to enter with them. They stood before him to receive his valedictory, his farewell charge. All history fur-

nishes nothing parallel for pathos and sublimity. The charge in every respect measures up to the occasion. First, he recounts the dealings of God with their fathers. The recital begins with Deuteronomy xxvi: then he impressively reminds them of their duty; then with the assembled elders he sacredly enjoins them to preserve and keep the laws which they had received from heaven. Nothing could add to the solemnity of the charge, as he proceeded to depict the blessings which would attend obedience, and the calamities which would certainly follow if they should become disobedient. Let the reader, before he advances further in this reading, turn to the address and read it through. There is nothing equal to it in history or romance for pathos. It rises to the majesty of an address of which God himself might well be the author. The event shows that Moses was the mouth-piece of Jehovah himself. Only the most callous could go through the reading without being moved with the sense of its divinity.

In this solemn address occurs the prophecy now under consideration; it is in these words: "The Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; and among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; . . . and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb and a by-word among all the nations whither the Lord shall lead thee; . . . and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway; . . . then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed; even great plagues and of long continuance." By turning to Lev. xxvi, the reader will find therein the substance of many of the predictions contained in this address. Let the reader also read the chapters through. The predictions are in substance the same.

This prophecy is in some respects the most remarkable in the holy record. In one respect, at least, it is peculiar; it is conspicuously fulfilled before the gaze of the whole world, and

it involves a perpetual miracle, not more in the fulfillment than in the facts it exhibits. The literature of the world contains scarcely any thing equal to it for depicture of tragedy; for accurate forecast it is unsurpassed. After Moses pronounces the blessings which should follow the faithful observance of the statutes which he delivered them from God, he portrays the calamities which should certainly overtake them if they should prove disobedient. We have selected one striking paragraph and group around it a number of other prophecies from other sources. The selection was made solely because the thing predicted seemed so utterly improbable, and because we are now the direct witnesses of its fulfillment. It was written more than three thousand two hundred years ago. To this, as agreeing, should be added the following: "I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. . . . And upon them that are left of you I will send a faintness into their hearts in the lands of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee, as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth. . . . And ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen, and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquity in your enemies' lands; and also in the iniquities of their fathers shall they pine away with them. . . . And yet for all that, when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them, to destroy them utterly." Lev. xxvi, 33-44. "And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord shall lead you." Deut. iv, 27. "The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be

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removed into all the kingdoms of the earth." Deut. xxviii, 25. "The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart: and thou shalt grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways: and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee. . . . Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given unto another people, . . . there shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land, and all thy labors, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see. . . . The Lord shall bring thee . . . unto a nation which neither thou nor thy fathers have known; . . . and thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word, among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee." Deut. xxviii, 28-37. "Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things; therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things: and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. . . . Then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful, and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues, and of long continuance." Deut. xxviii, 47, 48, 59. "All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee, and overtake thee, . . . and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed forever. . . . And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you; so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to naught; and ye shall be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other. . . . And among these nations shalt thou find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot

have rest : but the Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind : and thy life shall hang in doubt before thee ; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life." Deut. xxviii, 45, 46, 63-66. These are the predictions of Moses.

The writings of the succeeding and later prophets abound with similar predictions. Eight hundred years later Jeremiah wrote : " I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth. . . . will I cast you out into a land that ye know not, where I will not show you favor. . . . I will feed them . . . with wormwood, and give them water of gall to drink. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known." Jer. xv, 4 ; xvi, 13 ; ix, 15, 16. " I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach and a proverb, a taunt and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them. And I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence, among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers." Jer. xxiv, 9, 10. " I will . . . deliver them to be removed to all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, among all the nations whither I have driven them." Jer. xv, 7 ; xxix, 18. Ezekiel takes up the same strain, a little later : " I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds." Ezek. v, 10. " I shall scatter them among the nations, and disperse them in the countries." Ezek. xii, 15. " I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." Amos ix, 9. " But fear not thou, O my servant Jacob . . . for, behold, I will save thee from afar off, and thy seed from the land of their captivity ; . . . I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee : but I will not make a full

end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not leave thee wholly unpunished." Jer. xlv, 27, 28. "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim: afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Hosea iii, 4, 5.

I quote at length from Keith on the Prophecies, since it is better to use his exact words and give him the credit than to avail myself of his labor and mar the result by a less perfect statement:

"All these predictions respecting the Jews are delivered with the clearness of history and the confidence of truth. They represent the manner, the extent, the nature, and the continuance of their dispersion; their persecutions, their blindness, their sufferings, their feebleness, their fearfulness, their pusillanimity, their ceaseless wanderings, their hardened impenitence, their insatiable avarice, and the grievous oppression, the continued spoliation, the marked distinction, the universal mockery, the unextinguishable existence, and unlimited diffusion of their race. They were to be plucked from off their own land, smitten before their enemies, and left few in number. The Romans destroyed their cities and ravaged their country; and the inhabitants who escaped from the famine, the pestilence, the sword, and the captivity were forcibly expelled from Judea, and fled as houseless wanderers into all the surrounding regions. But they clung, for a time, around the land which their fathers had possessed for so many ages, and on which they looked as an inheritance allotted by Heaven to their race; and they would not relinquish their claim to the possession of it by any single overthrow, however great. Unparalleled as were the miseries

which they had suffered in the slaughter of their kindred, the loss of their property and their homes, the annihilation of their power, the destruction of their capital city, and the devastation of their country by Titus, yet the fugitive and exiled Jews soon resorted again to their native soil; and sixty years had scarcely elapsed when, deceived by an impostor, allured by the hope of a triumphant Messiah, and excited to revolt by intolerable oppression, they strove by a vigorous and united but frantic effort to reconquer Judea, to cast off the power of the Romans, which had every-where crushed them, and to rescue themselves and their country from ruin. A war which their enthusiasm and desperation alike protracted for two years, and in which, exclusive of a vast number that perished by famine and sickness and fire, five hundred and eighty thousand Jews are said to have been slain, terminated in their entire discomfiture and final banishment. They were so beset on every side, and cut down in detached portions by the Roman soldiers, that, in the words of a heathen historian, very few of them escaped. Fifty of their strongholds were razed from the ground, and their cities sacked and consumed by fire; Judea was laid waste and left as a desert.* Though a similar fate never befell any other people without proving the extirpation of their race or the last of their miseries, that awful prediction, in its reference to the Jews, met its full completion, while yet they survive to await, in every country, while exiles from their own, an accumulation of almost unceasing calamities, protracted throughout many succeeding ages. 'The cities shall be wasted without inhabitant. Every city shall be forsaken, and not a man dwell therein. They were rooted out of their land in anger, and in wrath, and in great indignation.' Isa. vi, 11; Jer. iv, 29; Deut. xxix, 28. A public edict of the emperor Adrian rendered it a capital crime for a Jew to

* Dion Cassius, lib. lxi; Jackson, Patrick, Basnage, etc.

set foot in Jerusalem,* and prohibited them from viewing it even at a distance. Heathens, Christians, and Moham-medans have alternately possessed Judea. It has been a prey of the Saracens; the descendants of Ishmael have often overrun it; the children of Israel have alone been denied the possession of it, though it forms the only spot on earth where the ordinances of their religion can be observed. And amidst all the revolutions of states and the extinction of many nations in so long a period, the Jews alone have not only ever been aliens in the land of their fathers, but whenever any of them have been permitted, at any period since the time of their dispersion, to sojourn there, they have experienced even more contumelious treatment than elsewhere. Benjamin of Tudela, who traveled in the twelfth century through a great part of Europe and of Asia, found the Jews every-where oppressed, particularly in the Holy Land. And to this day (while the Jews who reside in Palestine, or who resort thither in old age that their bones may not be laid in a foreign land, are alike ill-treated and abused by Greeks, Armenians, and Europeans),† the haughty deportment of the despotic Mussulman and the abject state of the poor and helpless Jews are painted to the life by the prophet: ‘The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low.’ Deut. xxviii, 43.

“But the extent is still more remarkable than the manner of their dispersion. Many prophecies describe it, and foretold thousands of years ago what we now behold: ‘They have been scattered among the nations—among the heathen—among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other.

* Tertullian, *Ap.*, c. xxi, p. 51; *Ibid.*, “Adv. Judæos,” c. xiii, p. 146, ed. Paris, 1608. Basnage’s “Continuation of Josephus,” b. vi, c. 9, § 27.

† General Straton’s MS. Travels.

They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth ; the whole remnant of them has been scattered into all the winds ; they have been dispersed throughout all countries, and sifted among the nations like as corn is sifted in a sieve, and yet not the least grain has fallen upon the earth ;' though dispersed throughout all nations, they have remained distinct from them all. And there is not a country on the face of the earth where the Jews are unknown. They are found alike in Europe, Asia, Africa, and America. They are citizens of the world, without a country. Neither mountains, nor rivers, nor deserts, nor oceans, which are the boundaries of other nations, have terminated their wanderings. They abound in Poland, in Holland, in Russia, and in Turkey. In Germany, Spain, Italy, France, and Britain, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, India, on the east and on the west of the Ganges, they are few in number among the heathen. They have trod the snows of Siberia and the sands of the burning desert ; and the European traveler hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa, south of Timbuctoo.* From Moscow to Lisbon, from Japan to Britain, from Borneo to Archangel, from Hindostan to Honduras, no inhabitant of any nation upon the earth would be known in all the intervening regions but a Jew alone.

“But the history of the Jews throughout the whole world, and in every age since their dispersion, verifies the most minute predictions concerning them ; and to a recital of facts too well authenticated to admit of dispute, or too notorious for contradiction, may be added a description of them all in the very terms of the prophecy. In the words of Basnage, the elaborate historian of the Jews, ‘Kings have often employed the severity of their edicts and the hands of the executioner to

*Lyon's "Travels in Africa," p. 146.

destroy them ; the seditious multitude has performed massacres and executions infinitely more tragical than have the princes. Both kings and people, heathens, Christians, and Mohammedans, who are opposite in so many things, have united in the design of ruining this nation, and have not been able to effect it. The bush of Moses, surrounded with flames, has always burnt without consuming. The Jews have been driven from all places of the world ; which has only served to disperse them in all parts of the universe. They have, from age to age, run through misery and persecution, and torrents of their own blood.* Their banishment from Judea was only the prelude to their expulsion from city to city and from kingdom to kingdom. Their dispersion over the globe is an irrefragable evidence of this, and many records remain that amply corroborate the fact. Not only did the first and second centuries of the Christian era see them twice rooted out of their own land, but each succeeding century has teemed with new calamities to that once chosen but now long-rejected race. The history of their sufferings is a continued tale of horror. Revolt is natural to the oppressed ; and their frequent seditions were productive of renewed privations and distresses. Emperors, kings, and caliphs all united in subjecting them to the same 'iron yoke.' Constantine, after having suppressed a revolt which they raised, and having commanded their ears to be cut off, dispersed them as fugitives and vagabonds into different countries, whither they carried in terror to their kindred the mark of their suffering and infamy. In the fifth century they were expelled from Alexandria, which had long been one of their safest places of resort. Justinian, from whose principles of legislation a wiser and more humane policy ought to have emanated, yielded to none of his predecessors in hostility and

* Basnage, b. vi, c. i, § 1 ; Jortin's "Remarks on Ecclesiastical History," vol. ii, p. 181, etc.

severity against them. He abolished their synagogues, prohibited them even from entering into caves for the exercise of their worship, rendered their testimony inadmissible, and deprived them of the natural right of bequeathing their property; and when such oppressive enactments led to insurrectionary movements among the Jews, their property was confiscated, many of them were beheaded, and so bloody an execution of them prevailed that, as is expressly related, ‘all the Jews of that country trembled;’* *a trembling heart was given them*. In the reign of the tyrant Phocas a general sedition broke out among the Jews in Syria. They and their enemies fought with equal desperation. They obtained the mastery in Antioch; but a momentary victory only led to a deeper humiliation, and to the infliction of more aggravated cruelties than before. They were soon subdued and taken captive; many of them were maimed, others executed, and all the survivors were banished from the city. Gregory the Great afforded them a temporary respite from oppression, which only rendered their spoliation more complete and their suffering more acute under the cruel oppression of Heraclius. That emperor, unable to satiate his hatred against them by inflicting a variety of punishments on those who resided within his own dominions, and by finally expelling them from the empire, exerted so effectually against them his influence in other countries that they suffered under a general and simultaneous persecution from Asia to the farthest extremities of Europe.† In Spain conversion, imprisonment, or banishment were their only alternatives. In France a similar fate awaited them. They fled from country to country, seeking in vain any rest for the sole of their foot. Even the wide-extended plains of Asia afforded them no resting-place, but have often been spotted with their blood, as well as the hills and valleys of Europe.

* Basnage's "History," b. vi, c. xxi, § 9.

† *Ibid.*, b. vi, c. xxi, § 17.

“Mohammed, whose imposture has been the law and the faith of such countless millions, has, from the precepts of the Koran, infused into the minds of his followers a spirit of rancor and enmity toward the despised and misbelieving Jews. He set an early example of persecution against them, which the Mohammedans have not yet ceased to imitate. In the third year of the Hegira, he besieged the castles which they possessed in the Hegiasa, compelled those who had fled to them for refuge and defense to an unconditional surrender, banished them from the country, and parted their property among his Mussulmans. He dissipated a second time their re-combined strength, massacred many of them, and imposed upon the remnant a permanent tribute. The Church of Rome ever ranked and treated them as heretics. The canons of different councils pronounced excommunication against those who should favor or uphold the Jews against Christians; enjoined all Christians neither to eat nor to hold any commerce with them; prohibited them from bearing public offices or having Christian slaves; appointed them to be distinguished by a mark; decreed that their children should be taken from them, and brought up in monasteries; and, what is equally descriptive of the low estimation in which they were held and of the miseries to which they were subjected, there was often a necessity, even for those who otherwise oppressed them, to ordain that it was not lawful to take the life of a Jew without a cause.* Hallam's account of the Jews during the Middle Ages is short, but significant: ‘They were every-where the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre. A time of festivity to others was often the season of mockery and persecution to them. It was the custom at Toulouse to smite them on the

* Dupin's “Ecc. Hist. Canons” of different councils: Toledo, A. D. 633; Meaux, 845; Paris, 846; Pavia, 850; Metz, Coyaco, 1050; Rouen, 1074; Ravenna, 1311; Saltzburgh, 1420.

face every Easter. At Beziers they were attacked with stones from Palm Sunday to Easter, an anniversary of insult and cruelty generally productive of bloodshed, and to which the populace was regularly instigated by a sermon from the bishop. It was the policy of the kings of France to employ them as a sponge to suck their subjects' money, which they might afterward express with less odium than direct taxation would incur. It is almost incredible to what a length extortion of money from the Jews was carried. A series of alternate persecution and tolerance was borne by this extraordinary people with an invincible perseverance, and a talent of accumulating riches which kept pace with the exactions of their plunderers. Philip Augustus released all Christians in his dominions from their debts to the Jews, reserving a fifth part to himself. He afterward expelled the whole nation from France.* St. Louis twice banished and twice recalled them; and Charles VI. finally expelled them from France. From that country, according to Mezeray, they were seven times banished. They were expelled from Spain, and by the lowest computation one hundred and seventy thousand families departed from that kingdom.† 'At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spires, Worins, many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricaded their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews were renewed at each crusade.‡ In England, also, they suffered great cruelty and oppression at the same period. During the crusades, the whole nation united in the persecution of them. In a single instance at York, fifteen hundred Jews, including women and

* Hallam, vol. i, pp. 233, 234.

† Basnage, b. vii, c. xxi; Bishop Newton.

‡ Gibbon's "History," vol. xi, c. lviii, p. 26.

children, were refused all quarter, could not purchase their lives at any price, and, frantic with despair, perished by a mutual slaughter. Each master was the murderer of his family, when death became their only deliverance. The scene of the castle of Massada, which was their last fortress in Palestine, and where nearly one thousand perished in a similar manner,* was renewed in the castle of York. So despised and hated were they that the barons, when contending with Henry III., to ingratiate themselves with the populace ordered seven hundred Jews to be slaughtered at once, their houses to be plundered, and their synagogue to be burned. Richard, John, and Henry III. often extorted money from them; and the last, by the most unscrupulous and unsparing measures, usually defrayed his extraordinary expenses with their spoils, and impoverished some of the richest among them. His extortions at last became so enormous, and his oppressions so grievous, that, in the words of the historian, he reduced the miserable wretches to desire leave to depart the kingdom;† but even self-banishment was denied them. Edward I. completed their misery, seized on all their property, and banished them the kingdom. Above fifteen thousand Jews were rendered destitute of any residence, were despoiled to the utmost, and reduced to ruin. Nearly four centuries elapsed before the return to Britain of this abused race.

“Some remarkable circumstances attest, without a prolonged detail of their miseries, that they have been a people everywhere peculiarly oppressed. The first unequivocal attempt at legislation in France was an ordinance against the Jews. And toward them alone one of the noblest charters of liberty on earth—Magna Charta, the Briton’s boast—legalized an act of

* Basnage, b. vii, c. x, sect. 20; Josephus, b. vii, c. viii, ix; Bishop Newton; Rapin’s “History of England,” vol. iii, p. 97.

† Rapin’s “History of England,” vol. iii, p. 405.

injustice.* For many ages after their dispersion they found no resting-place in Europe, Asia, or Africa, but penetrated in search of one to the extremities of the world. In Mohammedan countries they have ever been subject to persecution, contempt, and every abuse. They are in general confined to one particular quarter of every city (as they formerly were to old Jewry in London); they are restricted to a peculiar dress, and in many places are shut up at stated hours. In Hamadan, as in all parts of Persia, 'they are an abject race, and support themselves by driving a peddling trade; they live in a state of great misery, pay a monthly tax to the government, and are not permitted to cultivate the ground or to have landed possessions.'† They cannot appear in public, much less perform their religious ceremonies, without being treated with scorn and contempt.‡ The revenues of the prince of Bokhara are derived from a tribute paid by five hundred families of Jews, who are assessed according to the means of each. In Zante they exist in miserable indigence, and are exposed to considerable oppression.§ At Tripoli, when any criminal is condemned to death, the first Jew who happens to be at hand is compelled to become the executioner; a degradation to the children of Israel to which no Moor is ever subjected.|| In Egypt they are despised and persecuted incessantly.¶ In Arabia they are treated with more contempt than in Turkey.** The remark is common to the most recent travelers both in Asia and Africa,†† that the Jews themselves are astonished, and the natives indignant, at any act of kindness, or even of justice, that is per-

* Articles xii, xiii.

† Morier's "Travels in Persia," p. 379.

‡ Sir J. Malcolm's "History of Persia," vol. ii, p. 425.

§ Hughes's "Travels," vol. i, p. 150.

|| Lyon's "Travels," p. 16.

¶ Denon's "Travels in Egypt," vol. i, p. 213.

** Niebuhr's "Travels," vol. i, p. 408.

†† Morier's "Travels in Persia," p. 266; Lyon's "Travels in Africa," p. 32.

formed toward any of this 'despised nation' and persecuted people. In Southey's Letters from Spain and Portugal, this remarkable testimony is borne respecting them: 'Till within the last fifty years the burning of a Jew formed the highest delight of the Portuguese; they thronged to behold this triumph of the faith, and the very women shouted with transport as they saw the agonized martyr writhe at the stake. Neither sex nor age could save this persecuted race; and Antonio Joseph de Silva, the best of their dramatic writers, was burned alive because he was a Jew.' Few years have elapsed since there was a severe persecution against them in Prussia and in Germany, and in several of the smaller states of the latter country they are not permitted to sell any goods even in the common markets. The pope has lately re-enacted some severe edicts against them; and ukases have recently been issued in quick succession,* restraining the Jews from all traffic throughout the interior government of Russia. They are absolutely prohibited, on pain of immediate banishment, from 'offering any article to sale,'† whether in public or private, either by themselves or by others. They are not allowed to reside, even for a limited period, in any of the cities of Russia, without an express permission from government, which is granted only in cases where their services are necessary or directly beneficial to the state. A refusal to depart, when they become obnoxious to so rigid a law, subjects them to be treated as vagrants; and none are suffered to protect or to shelter them. Though the observance of such edicts must, in numerous instances, leave them destitute of any means of support, yet their breach or neglect exposes them to oppression under

* 15th November, 1797. 25th February, 1823. 8th June, 1826. August or November, 1827.

† Ukase, quoted from "The World," of date 31st October, 1827. *Ibid.*, article viii.

the sanction of the law, and to every privation and insult, without remedy or appeal. And though they may thus become the greatest objects of pity, all laws of humanity are reversed by imperial decrees toward them. For those who harbor Jews that are condemned to banishment, for having done what all others may innocently do, are, as the last Russian ukase respecting them reads, 'amenable to the laws as the abettors of vagrants,' and, as in numberless instances besides, no man shall save them.

"While the recent ameliorated condition of the Jews in the more civilized countries of Europe begins to give promise of the dawn of that day when the cup of trembling shall be taken out of their hands, and while signs are not wanting to show that it shall be given into the hands of their enemies, new illustrations may still be adduced to this hour of the indignities and miseries to which they are subjected. The latest testimony from Turkey bears that 'it is impossible to express the contemptuous hatred in which the Osmanlis (Turks) hold the Jewish people; and the veriest Turkish urchin who may encounter one of the fallen nation on his path has his mite of insult to add to the degradation of the outcast and wandering race of Israel. Nor dare the oppressed party revenge himself even upon this puny enemy, whom his very name suffices to raise up against him.'* Instances are added of a Turkish boy of ten years of age felling to the earth a feeble Jewess, and of Turkish boys, in their amusements, insulting and tormenting a Jew. 'I will give children to be their princes; and babes shall rule over them. As for my people, children are their oppressors.'†

"These facts, though they form but a brief and most imper-

* "The City of the Sultan and the Domestic Manners of the Turks in 1836," by Miss Pardoe, vol. ii, pp. 362, 363.

† Isa. iii, 4, 12.

fect record, and therefore but a very faint image of all their sufferings, show that the Jews have been removed into all kingdoms for their hurt; that a sword has been drawn after them; that they have found no rest for the sole of their foot; that they have not been able to stand before their enemies; there has been no might in their hands; their very avarice has proved their misery; they have been spoiled evermore; they have been oppressed and crushed alway; they have been mad for the sight of their eyes that they did see, as the tragical scenes at Massada and York and many others testify; they have often been left in hunger, and thirst, and nakedness, and in want of all things; a trembling heart and sorrow of mind have been their portion; they have often had none assurance of their life; their plagues have been wonderful and great, and of long continuance; and they have been for a sign and for a wonder during many generations.

“But the predictions rest not even here. It was distinctly prophesied that the Jews would reject the Gospel; that, from the meanness of his mortal appearance, and the hardness of their hearts, they would not believe in a suffering Messiah; ‘that they would be smitten with blindness and astonishment of heart; that they would continue long, having their ears deaf, their eyes closed, and their hearts hardened; and that they would grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.’* And the great body of the Jewish nation has continued long to reject Christianity. They retain the prophecies, but discern not their light, having obscured them by their traditions. Many of their received opinions are so absurd and impious, their rites are so unmeaning and frivolous, their ceremonies are so minute, absurd, and contemptible, that the account of them would surpass credibility, were it not a transcript of their customs and of their manners, and drawn from

* Deut. xxviii, 29.

their own authorities.* No words can more strikingly or justly represent the contrast between their irrational tenets, their degraded religion, their superstitious observances, and the dictates of enlightened reason and of the Gospel which they vilify than the emphatic description, 'They grope at noonday, as the blind gropeth in darkness.' And if any other instances be wanting of the prediction of events infinitely exceeding human foresight, the dispositions of all nations respecting them are revealed as explicitly as their own. That the Jews have been 'a proverb, an astonishment, a by-word, a taunt, and a hissing among all nations,' though one of the most wonderful of facts, unparalleled in the whole history of mankind, and as inconceivable in its prediction as miraculous in its accomplishment, is a truth that stands not in need of any illustration or proof, and of which witnesses could be found in every country under heaven. Many prophecies concerning the Jews, of more propitious import, that yet remain to be accomplished, are reserved for testimonies to future generations if not to the present. But it is worthy of remark, as prophesied concerning them, that they have not been utterly destroyed, though a full end has been made of their enemies; that the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, the Romans, though some of the mightiest monarchies that ever existed, have not a single representative on earth; while the Jews, oppressed and vanquished, banished and enslaved, and spoiled evermore, have survived them all, and to this hour overspread the world. Of all the nations around Judea the Persians alone, who restored them from the Babylonish captivity, yet remain a kingdom.

"The Scriptures also declare that the covenant with Abraham, that God would give the land of Canaan to his seed for an everlasting possession, would never be broken; but that the children of Israel shall be taken from among the heathen,

* See Allen's "Modern Judaism;" the "Edinburgh Encyclopedia," art. *Jews*.

gathered on every side, and brought into their own land, to dwell forever where their fathers dwelt. Three thousand seven hundred years have elapsed since the promise was given to Abraham; and is it less than a miracle that, if this promise had been made to the descendants of any but of Abraham alone, it could not now possibly have been realized, as there exists not on earth the known and acknowledged posterity of any other individual, or almost of any nation, contemporary with him?

“That the people of a single state, which was of very limited extent and power in comparison of some of the monarchies which surrounded it, should first have been rooted up out of their own land in anger, wrath, and great indignation, the like of which was never experienced by the mightiest among the ancient empires, which all fell imperceptibly away at a lighter stroke; and that afterward, though scattered among all nations, and finding no ease among them all, they should have withstood eighteen centuries of almost unremitted persecution; and that after so many generations have elapsed they should still retain their distinctive form, or, as it may be called, their individuality of character, is assuredly the most marvelous event that is recorded in the history of the nations; and if it be not acknowledged as a ‘sign,’ it is in reality, as well as in appearance, ‘a wonder,’ the most inexplicable within the province of the philosophy of history. But that after the endurance of such manifold woes, such perpetual spoliation, and so many ages of unmitigated suffering, during which their life was to hang in doubt within them, they should still be, as actually they are, the possessors of great wealth; and that this fact should so strictly accord with the prophecy, which describes them, on their final restoration to Judea, as taking their silver and their gold with them, and eating the riches of the Gentiles; * and

* Isa. lx, 9; lxi, 6.

also that, though captives or fugitives ‘few in number,’ and the miserable remnant of an extinguished kingdom at the time they were ‘scattered abroad,’ they should be to this hour a numerous people, and that this should have been expressly implied in the prophetic declaration descriptive of their condition on their restoration to Judea, after all their wanderings, that the land shall be too narrow by reason of the inhabitants, and that place shall not be found for them,* are facts which as clearly show, to those who consider them at all, the operation of an overruling Providence as the revelation of such an inscrutable destiny is the manifest dictate of inspiration.

“Such are the prophecies and such are the facts respecting the Jews; and from premises like these the feeblest logician may draw a moral demonstration. If they had been utterly destroyed; if they had mingled among the nations; if, in the space of nearly eighteen centuries after their dispersion they had become extinct as a people; even if they had been secluded in a single region, and had remained united; if their history had been analogous to that of any nation upon the earth—an attempt might, with some plausibility or reason, have been made to show cause why the prediction of their fate, however true to the fact, ought not in such case to be sustained as evidence of the truth of inspiration. Or if the past history and present state of the Jews were not of a nature so singular and peculiar as to bear out to the very letter the truth of the prophecies concerning them, with what triumph would the infidel have produced these very prophecies as fatal to the idea of the inspiration of the Scriptures! And when the Jews have been scattered throughout the whole earth; when they have remained every-where a distinct race; when they have been despoiled evermore, and yet never destroyed; when the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never

* Isa. xlix, 19; Zech. x, 10.

occurred among any people, form the ordinary narrative of their history, and fulfill literally the prophecies concerning them, may not the believer challenge his adversary to the production of such credentials of the faith that is in him? They present an unbroken chain of evidence, each link a prophecy and a fact, extending throughout a multitude of generations, and not yet terminated. Though the events, various and singular as they are, have been brought about by the instrumentality of human means and the agency of secondary causes, yet they are equally prophetic and miraculous; for the means were as impossible to be foreseen as the end, and the causes were as inscrutable as the event; and they have been, and still in numberless instances are, accomplished by the instrumentality of the enemies of Christianity. Whoever seeks a miracle may here behold a sign and a wonder than which there cannot be a greater. And the Christian may bid defiance to all the assaults of his enemies from this stronghold of Christianity, impenetrable and impregnable on every side.

“The prophecies concerning the Jews are as clear as a narrative of the events. They are ancient as the oldest records in existence; and it has never been denied that they were all delivered before the accomplishment of one of them. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the events. And the facts are visible and present, and applicable even to a hair-breadth. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for three thousand two hundred years, seeing that he was astonished and amazed, on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments and in their conduct in the space of forty days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the self-same and of similar facts as wonderful as they have proved to be true?

3

Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when of necessity they were utterly ignorant of them all? The probabilities are infinitely against them. For the mind of man often fluctuates in uncertainty over the nearest events and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have elapsed, and to facts respecting them, contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception, it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And, viewing only the dispersion of the Jews, and some of its attendant circumstances—how their city was laid desolate, their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, leveled with the ground, and plowed over like a field—their country ravaged, and themselves murdered in mass, falling before the sword, the famine, and the pestilence—how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, led into captivity, driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat, where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of a world that everywhere hated and oppressed them—shattered in pieces, like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm—scattered over the earth, like fragments on the waters, and, instead of disappearing, or mingling with the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same, retaining similar habits and customs, and creeds and manners, in every part of the globe, though without ephod, teraphim, or sacrifice, meeting every-where the same insult, and mockery, and oppression—finding no resting-place without an enemy soon to dispossess them, multiplying amidst all their miseries, surviving their enemies, beholding, unchanged, the extinction of many nations, and the convulsions of all—robbed of their silver and of their gold, though cleaving to the love of them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity—often bereaved of their very children, disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered, ever

bruised, but never broken—weak, fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted—often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own misery—taken up in the lips of talkers, the taunt and hissing and infamy of all people, and continuing ever, what they are to this day, the sole proverb common to the whole world—how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture; and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of these wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who but the Father of spirits, possessed of perfect prescience, even of the knowledge of the will and of the actions of free intelligent and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings, unveiled all their destiny, and unmasked the minds of the Jews and of their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of a world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display of the power and of the prescience of God, an accumulation of many minds.”

Their preservation is the most wonderful part both of the prediction and fulfillment, and can only be explained by the further part they are yet to act in the accomplishment of remaining unfulfilled prophecies, when from among the nations, in some unforeseen way, God will gather his chosen people around the long-rejected standard of their Messiah, and restore to them the land given to Abraham and his seed. We do not venture upon the interpretation of unfulfilled prophecy; but that these wonderful people are to have a conspicuous part in the role of coming events we do not doubt.

It would have been natural for the Jewish prophets to confine their guesses, had they been mere guessers, to matters with which they were familiar—matters respecting their own race; especially

as at the time of these writings there was but little communication among different nations, and more especially as they esteemed themselves the only people of God, regarding all other people as outcasts, without part in the promises and revelations. To any one who is at all conversant with the history of those early ages lying back before the dawn of profane history, it is matter of amazement to find the sweep and accuracy of these prophetic writings; and more yet to find the proofs of their marvelously accurate contents, not, indeed, in contemporary annals of other nations—for if they possessed annals they have long since perished—but in the monumental remains and geographical features of the various countries mentioned, corresponding so exactly as they do with the incidental allusions scattered through the prophetic pages, and in the civilizations which have sprung from the stocks of these ancient nations, still attesting their primitive characteristics; and more especially still in the minute details of their then distant future histories which have been so remarkably fulfilled, the evidence of which falls within historic ages, descending even to our own time. To some of these we call special attention as not less wonderful than those which we have already noticed concerning the Jews themselves.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING ISHMAEL.

We select, as in some respects the most striking prophecy in the ancient Scriptures, the prophecy with relation to Ishmael. Ishmael was the son of Abraham by Hagar, the Egyptian bond-woman. He was rejected from the Messianic line but was made a subject of special prophecy. The prophecy dates back to the time of Abraham, nearly four thousand years ago, and was placed on record by Moses three thousand three hundred years ago. It is in these words: "And the angel of the Lord said unto her [Hagar], Behold, thou art with

child, and shalt bear a son, and shalt call his name Ishmael; because the Lord hath heard thy affliction. And he will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him: and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." Gen. xvi, 11, 12. There are other prophecies concerning Ishmael as marked as this: "As for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation." Gen. xvii, 20.

In both parts these predictions are remarkable—such as no human foresight or imagination could suggest. Why should Ishmael be a wild man? Why should his hand be against every man, and every man's hand against him? Why should he dwell in the presence of his brethren and not assimilate with them? Why should twelve princes spring from his loins? There is not another instance on record of such facts of any man. Why should he be the solitary exception, and how could it be foreknown? Yet this marvelous prediction is true to the letter of the descendants of this immarital son of Abraham. The Arab race is the perpetual monument of the truth of the wondrous prophecy. The miracle is as marked as is that in the case of the Jews, of their world-wide dispersion and their non-assimilation with other races. The Arab of to-day, in his wild, rocky desert of the peninsula of Arabia, answers to the portrait drawn nearly four thousand years ago as strikingly as the wandering Jew in every clime answers to his portrait drawn by the same superhuman Artist about the same time. Ishmael, equally with Isaac, is a permanent memorial of the inspiration of the prophetic foreshadowing. It is impossible to explain the facts on any other theory. Warred upon by all the nations of antiquity, they have still maintained their independence; surrounded by the impact of other races they have perpetually resisted alliance and interfusion; the

blood of Ishmael still flows unadulterated in their veins; their home is still the tent. Free as the winds which sweep their coasts, they still roam the desert inhabited by their ancestors, the terror of strangers and the insoluble enigma of civilization. The very name Arab suggests every thing in the prophecy.

We cannot, without undue expansion, even name the prophecies concerning Ammon and Moab, and Edom, or Idumea. Let the reader who would desire to extend his researches read the lectures of William Bengo Collyer, or Keith on the Prophecies, or, better yet, Newton. He will find in these elaborate treatises full and exhaustive discussions. If he will be at the pains to traverse the lands themselves he will find in the prophetic writings of three thousand years ago the best hand-book yet extant, as explanatory of the customs which meet him on every hand, and the only chart which explains the ruins which lie broadcast over the lands themselves. God has so ordered it that every coast and mountain becomes a permanent witness to the truth and inspiration of his ancient prophets.

There were no less remarkable prophecies concerning Tyre and Nineveh, and Sidon and Philistia, all of which have been fulfilled to the minutest detail, but these also we must pass by, referring the reader to the same sources of information already mentioned. Concerning all these lands the prophets pre-wrote the history with a minuteness of detail that amazes us, and which, reaching down to our time, is visible to this day. Modern travelers find no more fitting words in which to clothe their observations than the very language employed when these lands and proud cities were in their glory. The prophet depicts present facts with a vividness and accuracy which no traveler can surpass—the descriptions are absolutely realistic.

The very instruments to be employed, the very people to be used, are named and described with such exactness that mistake is inexcusable. No historian can add any thing to the recital—no tint in the picture is wanting; there is no excess. It is not a recital some parts of which have a possible resemblance to reality with other parts to which there are no corresponding realities, but a narrative exact in every part, great and small. The brief citations found in Note D of the Appendix should be referred to and carefully noted. Passing these by, we ask attention to a more extended reference to the prophecy respecting Babylon and Egypt, the lands of Hebrew captivities.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING BABYLON.

“If ever there was a city that seemed to bid defiance to any predictions of its fall, that city was Babylon. It was for a long time the most famous city in the whole world.* Its walls, which were reckoned among the wonders of the world, appeared rather like the bulwarks of nature than the workmanship of man.† The temple of Belus, half a mile in cir-

* Pliny, “Nat. Hist.,” lib. v, cap. xxvi.

† The extent of the walls of Babylon is variously stated, by Herodotus at 480 stadia, or furlongs, in circumference; by Pliny and Solinus at 60 Roman miles, or of equal extent; by Strabo at 385 stadia; by Diodorus Siculus, according to the slightly different testimony of Ctesias and Clitarchus, both of whom visited Babylon, at 360 or 365; and to the last of these statements that of Quintus Curtius nearly corresponds, namely, 368. The difference of a few stadia rather confirms than disproves the general accuracy of the last three of these accounts. There may have been an error in the text of Herodotus of 480 instead of 380, which Pliny and Solinus may have copied. The variation of 20 or 25 stadia in excess may have been caused by the line of measurement having been the outside of the trench, and not immediately of the wall. And thus the various statements may be brought nearly to correspond. Major Rennel, estimating the stadium at 491 feet, computes the extent of the wall at 34 miles, or eight and a half on each side. The opposite and contradictory statements of the height and breadth of the wall may possibly be best reconciled on the supposition that they

cumference and a furlong in height; the hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls; the embankments which restrained the Euphrates; the hundred brazen gates, and the adjoining artificial lake, all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single point.* Yet, while in the plenitude of its power, and, according to the most accurate chronologers, one hundred and sixty years before the foot of an enemy had entered it, the voice of prophecy pronounced the doom of the mighty and unconquered Babylon. A succession of ages brought it gradually to the dust; and the gradation of its fall is marked till it sunk at last into utter desolation. At a time when nothing but magnificence was around Babylon the great, fallen Babylon was delineated exactly as every traveler now describes its ruins. And the prophecies concerning it may be viewed connectedly from the period of their earliest to that of their latest fulfillment.

“The immense fertility of Chaldea, which retained also the name of Babylonia till after the Christian era,† corresponded, if that of any country could vie, with the greatness of Babylon. It was the most fertile region of the whole East.‡ Babylonia was one vast plain, adorned and enriched by the Euphrates and the Tigris, from which, and from the numerous canals that intersected the country from the one river to the other, water was distributed over the fields by manual labor and by hydrau-

refer to different periods. Herodotus states the height to have been 200 cubits, or 300 feet, and the breadth 50 cubits, or 75 feet. According to Curtius, the height was 130 feet, and the breadth 32; while Strabo states the height at 75 feet, and the breadth at 32 feet.

* Herod., lib. i, c. clxxviii; Diodor. Sic., lib. ii., p. 26. (Calmet.) Plin., lib. v, c. xxvi; Quintus Curtius, lib. v, c. iv. See Prideaux, Rollin, etc.

† Strabo, lib. xvi, p. 743.

‡ “Agrum totius orientis fertilissimum.”—Pliny, “Natural History,” lib. v, c. xxvi.

lie machines,* giving rise, in that warm climate and rich, exhaustless soil, to an exuberance of produce without a known parallel over so extensive a region, either in ancient or modern times. Herodotus states that he knew not how to speak of its wonderful fertility, which none but eye-witnesses would credit; and, though writing in the language of Greece, itself a fertile country, he expresses his own consciousness that his description of what he actually saw would appear to be improbable, and to exceed belief. . . .

“Manifold are the prophecies respecting Babylon and the land of the Chaldeans; and the long lapse of ages has served to confirm their fulfillment in every particular, and to render it at last complete. The judgments of heaven are not casual, but sure; they are not arbitrary, but righteous. And they were denounced against the Babylonians and the inhabitants of Chaldea especially because of their idolatry, tyranny, oppression, pride, covetousness, drunkenness, falsehood, and other wickedness. So debasing and brutifying was their idolatry—or so much did they render the name of religion subservient to their passions—that practices the most abominable, which were universal among them, formed the very observance of some of their religious rites, of which even heathen writers could not speak but in terms of indignation and abhorrence. Though enriched with a prodigality of blessings, the glory of God was not regarded by the Chaldeans; and all the glory of man with which the plain of Shinar was covered has become, in consequence as well as in chastisement of prevailing vices and of continued though diversified crimes, the wreck, the ruin, and utter desolation which the word of God (for whose word but his?) thus told from the beginning that the event would be.

“The burden of Babylon, which Isaiah the son of Amoz did

* Herod., lib. i, c. cxcii.

see. . . . The noise of a multitude in the mountains, like as of a great people ; a tumultuous noise of the kingdoms of nations gathered together : the Lord of hosts mustereth the host of the battle. They come from a far country, from the end of heaven, even the Lord and the weapons of his indignation, to destroy the whole land. . . . Behold, I will stir up the Medes against them, which shall not regard silver ; and as for gold, they shall not delight in it. Their bows also shall dash the young men to pieces ; and they shall have no pity on the fruit of the womb ; their eye shall not spare children. And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation : neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there ; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there ; but wild beasts of the desert shall lie there ; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures ; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces.* . . .

“ ‘ For, lo, I will raise and cause to come up against Babylon an assembly of great nations from the north country : and they shall set themselves in array against her ; from thence she shall be taken : their arrows shall be as of a mighty expert man ; none shall return in vain. And Chaldea shall be a spoil : all that spoil her shall be satisfied, saith the Lord. . . . Behold, the hindermost of the nations shall be a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate : every one that goeth by Babylon shall be astonished, and hiss at all her plagues.’ † ‘ Her foundations are fallen, her walls are thrown down : for it is the vengeance of the Lord : take vengeance upon her ; as

* Isa. xiii, 1, 4, 5, 17-22.

† Jer. 1, 9, 10, 12, 13.

she hath done, do unto her. Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest: for fear of the oppressing sword they shall turn every one to his people, and they shall flee every one to his own land.*

“‘I will dry up her sea, and make her springs dry. And Babylon shall become heaps, a dwelling-place for dragons, an astonishment, and a hissing, without an inhabitant. . . . In their heat I will make their feasts, that they may sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake. . . . How is the praise of the whole earth surprised! how is Babylon become an astonishment among the nations! The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. Her cities are a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness, a land wherein no man dwelleth, neither doth any son of man pass thereby. And I will punish Bel in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up: and the nations shall not flow together any more unto him; yea, the wall of Babylon shall fall. . . . A rumor shall both come one year, and after that in another year shall come a rumor, and violence in the land, ruler against ruler. Therefore, behold, the days come, that I will do judgment upon the graven images of Babylon: and her whole land shall be confounded, and all her slain shall fall in the midst of her,’† etc. ‘And I will make drunk her princes, and her wise men, her captains, and her rulers, and her mighty men: and they shall sleep a perpetual sleep, and not wake, saith the King, whose name is The Lord of hosts. Thus saith the Lord of hosts; The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken, and her high gates shall be burned with fire; and the people shall labor in vain, and the folk in the fire, and they shall be weary. . . . And it shall be, when thou hast made an end of reading this book, that thou shalt bind a stone to it, and cast it into the midst of Euphrates: and thou shalt say, Thus

* Jer. l, 15, 16.

† Jer. li, 36, 37, 39, 41-44, 46, 47.

shall Babylon sink, and shall not rise from the evil that I will bring upon her.' *

"The enemies who were to besiege Babylon, the cowardice of the Babylonians, the manner in which the city was taken, and all the remarkable circumstances of the siege were foretold and described by the prophets as the facts are related by ancient historians." For this important matter we refer the reader to Appendix, Note D, and ask for it a careful reading.

PROPHECIES CONCERNING EGYPT.

"Egypt was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms, and the researches of the traveler are still directed to explore the unparalleled memorials of its power. No nation, whether of ancient or of modern times, has ever erected such great and durable monuments. While the vestiges of other ancient monarchies can hardly be found amidst the moldered ruins of their cities, those artificial mountains—the pyramids of Egypt—visible at the distance of thirty miles, without a record of their date, have withstood, unimpaired, all the ravages of time. The dynasty of Egypt takes precedence in antiquity of every other. No country ever produced so long a catalogue of kings. The learning of the Egyptians was proverbial. The number of their cities † and the population of their country, as recorded by ancient historians, almost surpass credibility. Nature and art united in rendering it a most fertile region. It was called the granary of the world. It was divided into several kingdoms, and their power often extended over many of the surrounding countries.‡ Yet the knowledge of all its greatness and glory deterred not the Jewish prophets from declaring that Egypt shall become a base kingdom, and never exalt itself any more above the nations. And the literal ful-

* Jer. li, 57, 58, 63, 64. † Twenty thousand. (Herod., lib. ii, c. clxxvii.)

‡ Marshami, Can. Chron. pp. 239, 242.

fillment of every prophecy affords as clear a demonstration as can possibly be given, that each of them is the dictate of inspiration.

“Egypt was the theme of many prophecies, which were fulfilled in ancient times; and it bears to the present day, as it has borne throughout many ages, every mark with which prophecy had stamped its destiny:

“‘They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms. Neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations.’* ”

“Egypt became entirely subject to the Persians about three hundred and fifty years previous to the Christian era. It was afterward subdued by the Macedonians, and was governed by the Ptolemies for the space of two hundred and ninety-four years, until, about thirty years before Christ, it became a province of the Roman empire. It continued long in subjection to the Romans, tributary first to Rome, and afterward to Constantinople. It was transferred, A. D. 641, to the dominion of the Saracens. In 1250 the Mamelukes deposed their rulers, and usurped the command of Egypt. A mode of government, the most singular and surprising that ever existed on earth, was established and maintained. Each successive ruler was raised to supreme authority from being a stranger and a slave: no son of the former ruler, no native of Egypt succeeding to the sovereignty; but a chief was chosen from among a new race of imported slaves. When Egypt became tributary to the Turks in 1517, the Mamelukes retained much of their power, and every pasha was an oppressor and a stranger. During all these ages every attempt to emancipate the country, or to create a prince of the land of Egypt, has proved abortive, and has often been fatal to the aspirant. Though the facts relative to Egypt

* Ezek. xxix, 14, 15.

form too prominent a feature in the history of the world to admit of contradiction or doubt, yet the description of the fate of that country and of the form of its government shall be left to the testimony of those whose authority no infidel will question, and whom no man can accuse of adapting their descriptions to the predictions of the event. Gibbon and Volney are again our witnesses of the facts.

“‘Such is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves, and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power, and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves brought from their original country. The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveler sees or hears reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny.’* ‘A more unjust and absurd constitution cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude, under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above five hundred years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borgite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants.’† These are the words of Volney and of Gibbon; and what did the ancient prophets foretell? ‘I will lay the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hands of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. And there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.

* Volney's "Travels," vol. i, pp. 74, 103, 110, 198.

† Gibbon's "History," vol. xi, c. lix, p. 164.

The scepter of Egypt shall depart away.' The prophecy adds: 'They shall be a base kingdom; it shall be the basest of kingdoms.'* After the lapse of two thousand and four hundred years from the date of this prophecy, a scoffer at religion, but an eye-witness of the facts, thus describes the self-same spot: 'In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, nor landholders. A universal air of misery, manifest in all the traveler meets, points out to him the rapacity of oppression and the distrust attendant upon slavery. The profound ignorance of the inhabitants equally prevents them from perceiving the causes of their evils or applying the necessary remedies. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge. Nothing is talked of but intestine troubles, the public misery, pecuniary extortions, bastinadoes, and murders. Justice herself puts to death without formality.'† Other travelers describe the most execrable vices as common, and represent the moral character of the people as corrupted to the core. As a token of the desolation of the country, mud-walled cottages are now the only habitations where the ruins of temples and palaces abound. Egypt is surrounded by the dominions of the Turks and of the Arabs; and the prophecy is literally true which marked it in the midst of desolation: Egypt 'shall be desolate in the midst of the countries that are desolate, and her cities shall be in the midst of the cities that are wasted.'‡ The systematic oppression, extortion, and plunder which have so long prevailed, and the price paid for his authority and power by every Turkish pasha, have rendered the country 'destitute of that whereof it was full,' and still show both how 'it has been wasted by the hands of strangers,' and how 'it has been sold into the hand of the wicked.'

* Ezek. xxx, 12, 13; xxix, 14, 15.

† Volney's "Travels," vol. i, pp. 190, 198.

‡ Ezek. xxix, 12.

“ ‘The waters shall fail from the sea, and the river shall be wasted and dried up. And they shall turn the rivers far away; and the brooks of defense shall be emptied and dried up: the reeds and flags shall wither. The paper reeds by the brooks, by the mouth of the brooks, and every thing sown by the brooks shall wither and be driven away, and be no more,’* etc. ‘I will make the rivers dry—and I will make the land waste,’† etc. ‘Son of man, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, and to his multitude: Whom art thou like in thy greatness? . . . Thou shalt lie in the midst of the uncircumcised with them that be slain by the sword. This is Pharaoh and all his multitude, saith the Lord God.’‡

“The turning far away of the rivers, or of the ancient branches of the Nile from their course, and the drying up of the canals and consequent emptying of the brooks, which spread fecundity over Egypt, may be ranked among the immediate and most influential causes of the desolation which has spread over the far greater part of Egypt. Wherever on the banks of the Nile irrigation is practiced, and the little rivers run about the plants and are sent out unto all the trees of the field, the wonderful luxuriance of the vegetation may well astonish a European; the sickly green-house plants of our cold and comparatively sunless clime [there] assume a gigantic form. And partial and narrow as these rich fringes now are, advancing hills of sand (through the sloping sides of which the stems, and upper branches, and topmost twigs of trees buried or being buried, may be seen as marking the progress of yet unstayed desolation) in some places, as at Rosetta, threaten destruction, like that of the felon condemned to stand on the brink of the rising tide. But over great part of Egypt desolation has done its perfect work. The streams of the Nile are now circumscribed within narrow limits to what formerly they were. On the western side of Egypt, as seen in Heath’s Plan of Egypt, an ‘ancient

* Isa. xix, 5-7.

† Ezek. xxx, 12.

‡ Ezek. xxxi, 2, 18.

bed of the river Nile, now dry, and called by the natives Bel-lohmah,' is distant eighty miles from the nearest branch of that river. The intermediate space, of greater length than breadth, is marked as 'immense sandy plains,' and a long canal, which partly intersected it, is now 'dry except at the time of the inundation.' Along the sea-coast the land is level and destitute of trees. And on the eastern side of Egypt 'the Pelusian branch of the Nile is choked up,' and the plain in which it flowed, except in a few stagnant pools, is undistinguished from the sandy desert which now surrounds it on every side. In the intermediate space, and even within the far narrower limits now occupied by the stream of the Nile, the dry lines of rivers and canals are to be seen, and the desert covers many extensive regions which once raised Egypt among the chief of the kingdoms. With the exception of the environs of Rosetta and Damietta and of a few miserable villages, in traversing the once rich delta of Egypt from one side to another, the traveler, as the writer witnessed, passes through a desert; and where streams once ran about the plants, and the little rivers were sent out among the trees of the field, water-skins are a necessary equipage of the traveler, and can only be filled anew after a journey of eight or ten hours or of a longer period, and sometimes too, at an unwholesome, stagnant well, of the like of which the cattle in this country would not drink. Assuredly the desert has spread over a large portion of the once fertile land of Egypt.

"The most recent travelers in Egypt, as in other countries, now see and acknowledge the marvelous fulfillment of the prophecies.

"'Long,' says Lord Lindsay, 'did we gaze on the scene around and below us (temple of Carnac at Thebes)—utter, awful desolation! Truly, indeed, has No been "rent asunder." The towers of the second, or eastern propylon, are mere heaps of stone, "poured down"—as prophecy and modern travelers

describe the foundations of Samaria—into the court on one side, and the great hall on the other ; giant columns have been swept away like reeds before the mighty avalanche. . . . Returning to the great obelisk, and seating myself on the broken shaft of its prostrate companion, I spent some delightful moments in musing over the scene of ruins scattered around me, so visibly smitten by the hand of God, in fulfillment of the prophecies that describe No-Amon as the scene of desolation I then beheld her. The hand of the true Jove-Amon, El-Amunah, the God of Truth, has indeed “executed judgments on all the gods of Egypt,” but especially on his spurious representative, the idol of this most stupendous of earthly temples ; silence reigns in its courts ; the “multitude of No” has been cut off ; Pathros is “desolate ;”—the land of Ham is still the basest of kingdoms—so sure is the word of prophecy, so visible its accomplishment. . . . We have spent the whole day in visiting the site of Memphis and the pyramids of Dashour and Sacara. Mounds and embankments, a few broken stones, and two colossal statues, disinterred a few years ago by Caviglia, are the solitary remains of the ancient capital of Lower Egypt. We rode for miles through groves of palm and acacia, cultivated fields, and wastes of sand, over what we knew must be the site of Memphis, but every other vestige of her ancient grandeur has disappeared. Noph is indeed “waste and desolate.” * *

“ Thus saith the Lord God, I will also destroy the idols, and I will cause their images to cease out of Noph. And I will make Pathros desolate, and will set fire in Zoan (marg. Tanis), and will execute judgments in No. And I will pour my fury upon Sin, the strength of Egypt ; and I will cut off the multitude of No. And I will set fire in Egypt : Sin shall have great pain, and No shall be rent asunder, and Noph shall have

* Lord Lindsay's “Travels,” vol. i, pp. 185-189.

distresses daily. The young men of Aven (Heliopolis) and of Pi-beseth (Pubastum) shall fall by the sword: and these cities shall go into captivity. At Tehaphnehes also the day shall be darkened, when I shall break there the yokes of Egypt; and the pomp of her strength shall cease in her. . . . Thus will I execute judgments in Egypt; and they shall know that I am the Lord.' *

"Though Herodotus numbered the cities of Egypt by thousands, yet all those which existed in the days of the prophets have long been in ruins. Egypt, of old exceedingly rich and populous, is now, except where still partially watered by the Nile and cultivated, bare and depopulated. Its two great cities, Cairo and Alexandria, are bordered by the desert. And with the exception of Rosetta and Damietta, and a few miserable villages, not a single town is to be met with in traversing Lower Egypt from Alexandria to El Arish, or from one extremity to the other. Thebes, once famed for its hundred gates, may be called, from the magnificence of its remains, the metropolis of ruins. The mummies, so abundant at Memphis, remain, though the city has perished; and the human forms which once peopled it have retained their perfect structure long after its palaces and temples have moldered into indistinguishable heaps. Heliopolis has now a single erect obelisk to tell that the mounds around it were once the 'city of the sun.' A single street, with its central square, of the city of Alexandria, built after the era of the prophets, occupied a greater space than the modern city. † 'At Bubastis, now Tel Basta, the Pi-beseth of Scripture, are lofty mounds, and some remains of the ancient city of Pasht. Many other mounds, in various parts of the delta, mark the sites of ancient towns.' ‡ The author, in hastily passing through Egypt, heard of ruins in various directions,

* Ezek. xxx, 13-19.

† See Heath's Plan of Alexandria.

‡ Wilkinson's "Thebes," p. 347.

and passed over those of Zoan, of which, besides the general desolation that was to come on the cities of Egypt, the prophet said, 'I will set fire in Zoan.' As the Lord wrought wonders of old in the fields of Zoan, so that city (the locality of which is undoubted) now bears in its ruins the proof of its ancient greatness, and the marks of its prophetic fate. The remains of Zoan being little known, as only partially described by travelers, may be more particularly noticed.

"San, or, as pronounced by the Arabs on the spot, Zaan, a small fishing village built of mud and brick, some of the dwellings consisting of the former and some of the latter, is the only representative of this seat of Pharaoh's glory. In its immediate vicinity, but raised considerably above the plain, are the ruins of the ancient city. These, in general, where not buried under sand, consist of large heaps of *débris*, formed of earth, broken bricks, and tiles in great abundance. The chief remains, all fallen, and lying almost in straight lines, seem to have belonged to the same range of grand and public edifices. On the remote extremity from the village high sandy mounds render any ruins or buildings invisible, if ever, as in all likelihood, they have existed there. Two fragments of obelisks, the one twenty-seven the other sixteen feet long, first appear above the sand. At the distance of sixty yards, upward of twenty large blocks of granite, evidently some portion of an ancient building, lie on the ground, and nearly the same number at a farther similar distance. Besides these last, there are broken fragments of obelisks covered with rubbish, and a stone figure or image in a sitting position, eleven feet in height, resting on a block five feet high and four broad, but lying nearly horizontally, with head inclined downward as if licking the dust. About thirty-six yards farther on in the same direction are three broken obelisks, of one of which the top or upper part, which has been broken off, twenty-four feet long, is lying horizontally, while the lower

part, in two other fragments, dips obliquely into the sand. The second obelisk, lying near it, is hid at both extremities, and broken in the middle : though above thirty feet long, it is evident that only a portion of it is seen ; the narrowest part of that which is visible is four feet in diameter. The third is evidently in an unfinished state. And this is a token, among other proofs, that the Lord has been a swift messenger against Egypt, and that his judgments have come upon it suddenly. At a farther distance of fifty yards two other obelisks lie contiguous ; and at a little distance from these, in a single spot, from seventy to eighty large stones or blocks of granite are crowded together (some of them six feet by four), most of which are partly hid in the ground, and some scattered around. Fragments of ruins lie over a large extent, and among these many vitrified pieces, larger than those on Gaza, are to be found, clearly indicating that the Lord had ‘set fire in Zoan.’

“ Can any words be more free from ambiguity, or could any events be more wonderful in their nature or more unlikely or impossible to have been foreseen by man, than these prophecies concerning Egypt ? The long line of its kings commenced with the first ages of the world, and while it was yet unbroken its final termination was revealed. The very attempt once made by infidels to show, from the recorded number of its monarchs and the duration of their reigns, that Egypt was a kingdom previous to the Mosaic era of the deluge places the wonderful nature of these predictions respecting it in the most striking view. And the previous experience of two thousand years, during which period Egypt had never been without a prince of its own, seemed to preclude the possibility of those predicted events which the experience of the last two thousand years has amply verified. Though it had often tyrannized over Judea and the neighboring nations, the Jewish prophets foretold that Egypt’s own scepter should depart ; and that that

country of kings (for the numbers of its contemporary as well as successive monarchs may warrant the appellation) would never have a prince of its own ; and that it would be laid waste by the hands of strangers. They foretold that it should be a base kingdom, the basest of kingdoms ; that it should be desolate itself, and surrounded by desolation, and that it should never exalt itself any more above the nations. They describe its ignominious subjection and unparalleled baseness, notwithstanding that its past and present degeneracy bears not a more remote resemblance to the former greatness and pride of its power than the frailty of its mud-walled fabrics now bears to the stability of its imperishable pyramids. Such prophecies, accomplished in such a manner, prove, without a comment, that they must be the revelation of the omniscient Ruler of the universe."

Here we close the citation of prophecies, not as having exhausted the entire list found in the sacred pages, or even all of the more remarkable passages, but rather because the chart is too vast to be explored ; and, more, because those cited answer all the demands of the argument. If ever there was proof in superabundance of any proposition, that here furnished, in support of the proposition that the Jewish prophets were inspired of God, is of that kind. No additional citations could increase its strength ; no unincluded circumstance could improve its value ; there is no point of weakness in it ; it is absolute proof.

The things noticeable in these marvelous prophecies are their great fullness and minuteness and their strangeness, and the fact that they are of such events as to make them a standing memorial throughout all generations—events not to come and pass into history, leaving it possible to raise a quibble about them as to whether they were fulfilling facts, but which were to be perpetually visible from age to age—an ever-present and continuous testimony.

Noticeable features of the prophecies.

Well does Bishop McIlvaine say, "What is this but miracle? Connected with the prophecy which it fulfills, it is double miracle. Whether testimony can ever establish the credibility of a miracle is of no importance here. This one is obvious to every man's senses. All nations are its eye-witnesses."

What Mind is it which pervades these matchless pages; which knows no limits of time or place; to whom the future is as the past; who sweeps through all time and over all nations, and under whose mysterious gaze all events seem to lie in utter nakedness; to whom not simply time and human history seem open, but eternity itself, and all worlds, appear to be unveiled? There can be but one answer: We are not in the presence of mere men, but more especially of God, when we open these sacred pages. We are consciously in the grip of a power more than ^{Prophecies manifestly of} God. human. The light that shines about us is no earthly radiance; these illuminations are not human; we are inevitably convinced of a superior Presence; the odor of the lamp is not here; the sparkle is not that of human genius. We stand in a great temple whose dome touches the sky, and whose walls bound time, and in its light we penetrate eternity. It is God's temple, and he is the light and glory of it. There have been and are to-day multitudes of scholars who, without doubt, far surpass in breadth of information, in culture and power of faculty, in all accurate learning, in natural and acquired ability, any of the writers of the Old or New Testament. Their opportunities are incomparably greater than were the opportunities of those. They have the advantages of thousands of years of research, and accumulations of knowledge. Science and philosophy have enriched them. The great world has become open to them from rim to rim—its own history and its human history. All that schools can teach they have learned; what is possible to genius is possible to them; but with all

their superior advantages, the combined learning, genius, and faculty of the world could not write the sacred books. The attempt would immediately show, by its failure at every point, to what an extent the Bible is superhuman. The human book might be rich and beautiful, but it would lack the celestial light which glorifies the sacred pages. Do we not know this?

Among the millions who have written about the Bible have any rivaled it? Place human books beside it—the works of the great thinkers—how do they dwarf into insignificance! How shallow their soundings compared with this profound! how narrow their range compared with this immensity! how feeble their flight compared with the sweep of this pinion! Why is this? Is any one at a loss for the answer? These are the books of men, whose life is limited to a span, whose faculties are shoal and feeble, who are confined within narrow bounds of time and space, who grope about in regions of sense and phenomena. They are hence narrow and inconsequent—human. They show the measure of an insect. This is God's book. He who came down from eternity is its author; he in whom and of whom are all things; who appointed creation's birth, and who conducts it to its end; who is, and was, and is to come; who knoweth all things. This is the only explanation of its unique character, its lengthly and stately corridors of thought; its vast and endless cycles of vision; its fathomless depths and summitless heights of knowledge; its infinities of sweep and range! The difference is the difference there is in the authors: the difference there is between man's work and God's work: the difference between the infinite Knower and finite guesser! A difference always and necessarily immeasurable and unremovable.

To any who may desire to pursue the prophetic argument further we recommend the more extended discussions found in

Newton, Keith, and Lardner, and others who have given the subject careful study and more extended examination and fuller statement. The papers found in the Appendix are abridged to the briefest space, but can be read and studied with great profit. It is impossible to conceive any circumstance that could add to the power of the argument, or to allege any thing in which it is wanting. No ingenuity can evade its force. The Bible can be rejected, but the proofs of a supernatural agent in its production never have been, and it is safe to say never can be, answered. The infidelity which refuses to accept it does so in defiance of reason, and can be ascribed to nothing but sheer volition, engendered of prejudice and passion, if not of something more discreditable still. Common candor and honesty ought at least to enforce the confession that the argument is unanswered and unanswerable, even if the doubt is retained.

It is possible for time so to effect changes and obliterate facts as to mar the force of evidences once conclusive, or as to destroy entirely proof once the most convincing. Witnesses whose testimony would determine any case die, and are no more of any avail because no adequate means Testimony subject to corruption. of preserving their testimony was provided. Contradictory, or confused, or unclear, or untrustworthy elements are liable to creep into proof, so that it may cease to have force. There is a failure of memory, there is passion, there is self-interest, there is dishonesty, there is lack of intelligence, there are a thousand things, any one of which impairs proof. It may for one cause or another cease to be possible to furnish proof. The case must go into doubt. Often the best causes and the greatest interests suffer irreparable wrong by the accidents which deprive them of their necessary supports.

The great on-movement of the world out of one age into another, the shifting interests of peoples, the engrossing de-

mands of each new time and of each new civilization, the loss of living interest in what is past and gone, the eagerness for what is to come, all conspire to bury in oblivion the past age even—much more the far past. What remains in most cases soon becomes uncertain. It is often impossible to discriminate between the true and the false. A pall of mythic and traditional exaggerations and imaginations hangs over remote antiquity. We are certain of almost only one thing of the far past—that is, that we are not quite certain of any thing. This is the rule. It is scarcely to be wondered at that skepticism with regard to every thing that comes to us from the dim and distant ages should be the tendency of our minds. This is especially so with regard to stories of marvel and wonder. It is not surprising that we discard them at once as silly tales and mere nursery fictions.

How to overcome the difficulty of attesting a revelation and then of preserving and perpetuating the proof, was the problem the infinite Author had to solve. No human device could meet the demand in either part. It required God to attest the revelation of God, and to devise a method to preserve *in perpetuum* his own testimony, so as to make it forever available. What was impossible to man was not difficult to him. He knew how to take care of his own word, and not simply how to furnish the original proof that it was his word; and more yet, how to preserve the proof in its integrity for all coming time; but still more yet, how to augment the proof from age to age, so that lapse of time should increase the volume of evidence; thus attesting to us, upon whom the end of the ages has come, his revelations even more fully than to the fathers who received them. It was a strange device. We depend upon traditions, or when we can have records, better yet; and if to these we can add enduring monuments we rest reasonably assured: but even these all fail to

Effects of time
on testimony.

Prophecy God's
method of pre-
serving his tes-
timony.

meet the full demands of proof. The traditions vary ; written history is liable to mutilation—becomes obscure ; the means of exact interpretation become inadequate ; even monuments crumble, or that of which they were memorials is forgotten. The result is, “we see through a glass, darkly,” as much with relation to the past, almost, as with relation to the future.

Now God well understood all this, and for the authentication and preservation of the proof of his revelation he devised a new and eternally infallible and perpetually augmenting proof—the proof of prophecy ; proof forever coming to us from the future, stronger each to-morrow than it was every yesterday. Its records are the ruins of empires ; the mutations of states ; obliteration of nations and civilizations ; the ever-present fortunes of his own Church ; the imperishable vitality of his revelation ; the conquest of the nations to it ; the present and centuries-old condition of Egypt, Syria, Phenicia, Arabia, Idumca, Babylon, Nineveh, Judea, and all the places celebrated in antiquity. These are his witnesses. They do not die. They do not forget. They do not contradict. They were before the jury, some of them, three thousand years ago, the youngest of them nearly two thousand. They are still on the stand, whitened with the frosts of many ages, but fresh and living still, bearing their testimony to-day to us with greater fullness than at any former period to any generation of our ancestors. The ages do not take from but add to their testimony. No cross-examination confuses the witness. No counter-proof is or can be introduced. The rocks and the sand-mounds tell perpetually the same story, and the slabs and mummies and coins and sculptures and tablets exhumed from amid the *débris* only add to the deposition.

The test is absolute. Here is a witness that cannot be rejected, and whom it is impossible to convict of error or falsehood, and whose testimony not only creates a prob-

ability in favor of the point he is called to establish, and which leaves the preponderance of evidence on that side, but a witness who furnishes absolute proof of the very matter in question.

God himself is the real witness, as he alone can be, when, as here, the point is one with respect to his own agency. The future of nations, peoples, empires, cities, is the language he employs—a language which no other being in the universe can learn or employ; the perpetual on-marching of time interprets his speech. These memorials abiding with us, whether in stone or flesh, attest the authorship. Fulfillment answering to prediction is absolute demonstration that he is the inditing mind.

If there were many ventures and many failures, with only an occasional success, and if the failures were always in the ventures where foresight was most difficult, and the successes were

No failures in in all cases where there was possible ground for a prophecy. guess, the argument would be practically worthless. But if there were very few predictions, and they were all clearly of events of which the grounds of inference did not exist, even one of the few would constitute unanswerable proof of more than human intelligence in the prediction, and would, in a world where no other book contained any thing of the kind, warrant faith in the supernatural agency of the authorship.

But what does reason compel us to say of the authorship of a book the larger part of whose pages are overspread with predictions of events themselves overspreading all time; events wholly disconnected from any facts existing at the time of their deliverance; events utterly unlike any thing ever known and the reverse of all experience, and in all respects improbable, often seemingly impossible; events entering into the life of the world over all its surfaces; a series of hundreds of such events concerning which there is no reason for failing to understand precisely what was intended, not one of which has

ever failed of fulfillment, and the proof of which fulfillment in most of the cases is now existing in ocular and tangible form before the living generation?

This is the problem for unbelief. Will skepticism undertake to furnish us the solution? It will undertake nothing of the kind. It will amuse itself with ribald jest, it will push out its lip of scorn, it will utter great swelling words of contempt, but it will never grapple with the problem in any manner befitting the seriousness and weight of its importance.

Here we rest the argument from prophecy. We do so with the firm conviction that it cannot be answered. We do so, also, with the concession that its validity is absolutely necessary to the vindication of Christianity; that either to ignore it as unimportant or to overthrow it is to remove one of the indispensable proofs of the system.

While it remains, nothing can defeat the Christian cause: no alleged discrepancies with science; no assaults upon its doctrines; no abuse or scandals heaped upon its name; no raids upon its history; no vulgar ridicule or ^{Adequacy of prophecies.} blasphemous tirades; no new developments of ancient learnings or modern knowledge; no new insight into the world of mind or into the laws and powers in the world of matter. While this pillar stands none of these things, nor any other thing, can shake down the God-built temple of revelation. The folly and pride of human reason and lust and passion, and the rage of human sin and diabolical ingenuity and strategy will in vain combine to demolish it. The assault, however long-continued and however re-enforced, will be impotent as the beating of the storms on the rocky foundations of the globe itself. Not until men can circumvent God, or, re-enforced by devils, can vanquish the truth of which he is author and guardian, can his word of revelation be overthrown.

But remove this pillar, ye who profess loyalty to God and assume and wear the Christian name, and join yourselves to the army of besiegers in the denial of its supernatural authorship, and the whole structure, tottering on its foundations, will fall into a mass of ruins, and Christianity, despite all its beauty and glory of achievement, will hasten to decay and final oblivion!

The majesty of the argument is worthy the Infinite Author, who has wrought ages into its construction. Beginning at Eden, he has continued down to this day to elaborate it. Himself its author, he has wrought through all times and in all climes to make it perfect. Towering up through the ages, he has left no unguarded spot, no weakness which his enemies might discover, no obscurity over which malignity might cavil, no loop-hole through which cunning might escape. It has outlived empires, survived all human changes, is yet in its perennial strength. It will outlive, we may venture to predict without being a prophet, the empires of the world now in their glory and the philosophies now in their beginning. He who holds eternity in his grasp, and the glory of whose life is perpetual amid all decay, and whose kingdom has no end, will still guard it in the long-drawn ages which come to meet us, as he has in the ages which lie in the deep shadows of the recent or long-vanished past. Whatever else may fail, the word of his prophecy will never fail; but will to the end of time be proof absolute that he has delivered revelations to men on the earth. Its power will increase, not diminish. There are prophecies remaining to be fulfilled. Their time has not yet come. Some of them are now fulfilling, some are near at hand. As these shall successively wheel into line, each new fulfillment will become an added and distinct proof in itself.

Among the fulfilling but not completely fulfilled prophecies, are prophecies with respect to the final overthrow and extinc-

tion of paganism and Mohammedanism, and the downfall, not of the Romish Church, but of papacy—the eradication of its paganized additions to the creed of ancient faith; prophecies of the universal prevalence and permanent establishment of Christianity as the kingdom of God in the earth, as the one religion among men; prophecies with respect to apostasies, fallings away, scoffings, and outbursts of great and prevailing sin in the final conflict before the consummation, to be followed with the universal triumph of truth and righteousness; prophecies of the final coming again of the Son of man in the clouds of heaven, attended by the mighty hosts of his angels; prophecies of the end of the world and the inauguration of the everlasting age in the final salvation of all believers, who constitute the Church of the living God, the blood-washed and redeemed of all ages and climes; and of the final banishment of Satan and his followers into the outer darkness of eternal perdition.

No prophecy is fully understood until its fulfillment. The fulfillment is the interpretation, and always clears it of obscurity. We are not able to interpret the Apocalypse now, nor do we know the exact meaning of the unfulfilled prophecies of both Testaments at present. When the events come forth there will remain no vestige of uncertainty. Meanwhile the fulfilled guarantee the unfulfilled. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the word of God will fail! There is nothing more improbable in the unfulfilled prophecies than there was in the fulfilled; it is safe to say nothing half so incredible. With the history of the past behind us, our faith need not stagger at what remains for the future hastening toward us.

THE ARGUMENT FROM MIRACLES.

It was with purpose that we have reversed the usual order in submitting the argument from Prophecy before offering that from Miracle, as the term is technically employed. Chronologically, miracle is the first in order of proof, and custom gives it the first place. Prophecy becomes proof only after lapse of time. Impossible in itself without supernatural agency, it nevertheless furnishes no proof of supernatural agency until it has been fulfilled. Miracle is proof immediate at the time of the revelation. The reasons for introducing prophecy first in the line of argument in support of the position that we have a revelation are, first, that there has been lapse of time sufficient to make the proof from prophecy now available; and, second, that the proof is now present with us, and incontrovertible. These things have been made to appear in the preceding argument. They are conclusive as evidence, if there were nothing more possible to be said.

Fulfilled prophecy demonstrates miraculous agency in the original prediction, and so establishes both the fact of miracle and the possibility of proving it, and also that it is according to the divine method and purpose to make use of it in carrying forward his government over intelligent beings, and is absolute proof of the supernatural origin of the revelation. These things are no mere matters of speculation, they are well-established facts and principles, forever henceforth available, without further vindication, for argument. God has resorted to miracle. The proof is before our eyes from age to age in fulfilled prophecy, and can no more rationally be disputed than a man can dispute what his eyes

behold. But there is yet a further reason for introducing the argument from Prophecy before presenting the argument from Miracles, and that reason is this—the prophecies announced that the Messiah would prove himself to be the Messiah by miracles; it is thus shown that miracles were to be expected. The prophecies thus become a sort of incidental introduction to the miracles. As has been shown, all the prophecies relating to the coming of Messiah with respect to his genealogy, and the precise time of his advent, and the place where he should appear, and the signs that should attend his coming, have already had an exact fulfillment. The fact that it was pre-
Christ to be a
worker of mir-
acles.
dicted that he would exhibit the credentials of mir-
acles rendered it necessary that he should be a miracle-worker, otherwise there would be ground for denying his claim despite fulfilled prophecy; failure to fulfill the prophecy would at the same time discredit the prophecy and himself. Miracles were provided for and to be expected.

Had no intimation been given by the prophets of this characteristic of Christ's ministry, still it is safe to say that, despite the supernatural proof from the fulfilled prophecies, it would yet have been important that he should be a miracle-worker. It is even doubtful if, in the absence of this proof, the other, however convincing, would have been adequate to win a following; yea, it is certain that men would have rejected him.

Miracles were the proper credentials. The prophecies were only credentials so far as they were miraculous. Still
Miracles the
proper creden-
tials.
other miracles, as signs, were, if not absolutely re-
quired, so important that their absence must have been fatal. This must be evident upon a very cursory reflection on the case.

The person introduced by the prophecy was not an ordinary personage. He was prophesied of as a special messenger from heaven—the Son of God. There was not only a propriety that there should be adequate attendant signs to support that

character, but the absence of them would have been not simply a blunder, but, when we consider all the interests involved, a crime against humanity, as the human mind is constituted.

Absence of prophecy would have been a crime. The mind is so made that it must demand a sign in such a case, and that it cannot without peril, even guilt, act without a sign. The demand for a sign is an ethic—a law vested in it by its very existence.

The truth of this position appears as soon as we interrogate our own consciousness. Suppose a person should appear among us making this identical claim, that he was a messenger from heaven, the very Son of God, and should proceed to deliver strange doctrines, and make demands upon us requiring that we renounce things most cherished and embrace things most unwelcome on the peril of our souls, what would we reasonably demand? Nay, more, what would our very nature compel us to demand? Would we not ask Our nature demands miracle. a sign? Could we accord our faith to such a claim without a sign? Would not our inevitable conclusion be, in the absence of such a sign, that the pretender was a knave or a lunatic? And would not universal reason vindicate that conclusion? The demand for miracle would be spontaneous and would be inexorable, except as we might desert the first impulse and last requirement of reason.

This demand, which as we consciously know must arise on the presentation of a claim, has yet a deeper meaning. It We instinctively believe in the miraculous. proclaims that we naturally believe that miraculous signs are possible. It shows yet further, that we know when they are required. It shows yet still further, that in our judgment they have evidential value to accredit such a messenger. These things are all involved in the demand.

But more than these things are implied in this perfectly spontaneous movement of mind. Why should it be universal if it be not constitutional? And if it be constitutional, how is

that to be explained on any other principle than that it is inevitable to reason to conclude that there is a supernatural power in the management of human affairs? It proclaims our instinctive belief in God, and that he can indicate his agency by appropriate signs, and would indicate himself if the occasion should ever exist for a special revelation.

But it proclaims still more than this. It proclaims that there are signs possible which, if they were given, would compel our reason to admit the presence and attesting agency of God. There is not a man who is sane and with a normal degree of intelligence who does not know that however he might be able to hold out against

A miracle compels the admission of God's agency.

mere wonders — curious and inexplicable things, as feats of legerdemain, jugglery, tricks that defy detection — and however he might be deceived by them, who yet does not know that he not only believes that real miracles are possible, but that if such were delivered they would be distinguishable and would compel conviction. Were a person to appear among us with these proofs we would be disposed to give him our faith, and it would be possible for the evidence to overcome all rational doubt, and compel either belief or unreasonable disbelief. We assume, in the spontaneous demand for miracles, the possibility of their occurrence, their necessity as evidence, their adequacy as proof, and that their existence ought to preclude further hesitation, or the doubt or possible rejection of one who should proclaim himself a messenger from heaven.

But we instinctively feel that the proof of the miracle should be absolute, and that faith in one making such a claim should be withheld until the proof of the supernatural attest becomes clear, positive, and irresistible. The pretense to such a character, or formal announcement of it, we instinctively feel ought to awaken suspicion of either the sanity or honesty of

the avowant—ought to put us on guard. However beautiful the character of the pretender, and however unquestionably sincere he might be, and however strong his personal convictions and declaration concerning his divine commission, we would feel ourselves bound to withhold faith on these or any such grounds. The claim is one which nothing short of miracle can establish.

This ground, which right reason as well as religion requires us to hold, is precisely that which Christ himself held. He Christ appealed to miracle. appealed to miracle as indispensable proof of his claim. He justified disbelief in the absence of such proof. That he meant that miracles were necessary credentials, and that he furnished them as such, no one can well question—his words are explicit: “The witness which I have is greater than that of John, for the works which the Father hath given me to accomplish, the very works that I do, bear witness of me.” John v, 36, R. V. “The works that I do in my Father’s name, they bear witness of me.” John x, 25. John the Baptist sent messengers to him, he being in prison for the testimony which he had borne, to inquire of him whether he were indeed the Christ, or should they look for another. His answer is explicit and convincing: “Go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard; the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, the poor have good tidings preached to them.” Luke vii, 22, R. V. The recitation pointed to the miracle of the fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy, as well as the miracle of the works wrought. When he pronounced on one occasion the forgiveness of sins, he, perceiving that the spectators were inwardly displeased with his words, said: “That ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins (then saith he to the sick of the palsy), Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thy house.” Matt. ix, 6, 7. “This beginning of miracles

did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth his glory; and his disciples believed on him." John ii, 11, 23. "Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." John iii, 2. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin: but now have they both seen and hated both me and my Father." John xv, 24. "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Acts ii, 22. "Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? the words that I speak unto you I speak not of myself: but the Father that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father in me, or else believe me for the very works' sake." John xiv, 10, 11.

Nothing is plainer than that Jesus taught that miracles were the proper credentials for accrediting his mission; that they were so—the proper credentials that those to whom he came were justifiable in demanding—and that the absence of them would free them from blame for rejecting him; that the entire ground of his claim rested on the supernatural testimony of the prophets, and on his supernatural works; that these were proof positive, and sufficient to render them guilty in refusing to hear him and to receive his words; that they were not the testimony of a man, or of men, but the immediate testimony of God himself—these points are asserted directly and impliedly in every variety of form, and can only be called in question by denying the record.

To reject miracles is to reject Christ as unauthenticated; is to reject the only proof he himself appeals to—the only adequate proof there is of his divine mission, since his appeal to prophecy is only because it is miraculous or

To reject miracles is to reject Christ.

supernatural : and is it not significant that those who reject miracles do reject his divine mission, and in some cases insist that he is a myth? Let special attention be given to this point.

There are two classes of thinkers who pronounce against miracles ; on what ground will appear in more advanced stages of the discussion. These classes differ in many respects radically, but here they come to unity.

The first class embraces all unbelievers technically so called ; that is, all atheists, agnostics, infidels, open and avowed scoffers at all religion—the allied enemies of God and his Church. They are a mixed multitude. A few among them are respectable for learning, for intelligence, for irreproachable character, and doubtless for conscientiousness, and many of them rank high in social position and influence ; but the larger part of this entire class are morally putrescent—bold blasphemers of God, leagued together as corrupt and corrupters—foul, blatant, unscrupulous defamers of all truth and righteousness—the pest-gang and moral outlaws of humanity. They are found chiefly in large cities, but are also diffused throughout Christendom. Germany festers with them, England and the United States are gangrened with them. All enemies of public welfare draw their recruits from this class.

It is not without significance that these features characterize the class in its rank and file at the same time that it includes exceptions of great moral worthiness, whose presence lends a deceptive lure of respectability to it. Nor is it difficult to account for the mixture. It is not strange that occasionally some among the ablest and purest men should be found on the wrong side, not by perversity but by misjudgment. Human limitations and the accidents of misdirecting influences of one kind and another are sufficient to explain the phenomenon of honest differences even in the plainest case. But it cannot be

reasonably doubted that the moral status of the class, as such, explains its hostility to miracles. It is instinctively discerned by all grades of mind, that if miracles be admitted there is a real foundation for divine religion. Hence the assault. The assault itself is a concession to the force of the proof. If miracles could be admitted without at the same time admitting that they support the claim of revelation nobody would be found to deny them. It is because the admission establishes some doctrine which the doubter is interested to disprove that the miracle is rejected.

The second class of assailants of miracles, and indeed of all supernaturalism, even revelation itself in the true and proper sense, assumes to be Christian. It calls itself Liberal Christianity. It has Sunday services of hymn and prayer and sermon. It builds churches and prints Bibles, and to a limited degree founds missions. It does charitable and noble humanitarian work among the poor and lowly. It is refined and high-toned in its morality: often in some respects is beautifully Christian in its spirit. It cannot be doubted that it includes many real Christians in its fold—men and women of the most Christly type, whose unconscious faith roots deeper than their creed. At its top it is as Christian as Channing, at its bottom as pagan as Conway, as the paganism of India, to which it bears a close kinship. Esoteric Buddhism and the lower basement of Liberal Christianity are nearer of kin than either of the two is to the Christianity of Christ.

This second class discards miracles. It is well that we pause to take in all that that fact means. It clothes itself with the external robes of Christ—calls itself by his name—insists that it is Christian.

There is room for charity to admit a large margin for difference on quite important doctrines of the Christian faith with-

Second class of rejecters.

out unchristianizing either extreme of the dissentients. They may each hold the substance or real essence of the truth which Christ delivered. Their differences are differences of phases of the faith—differences of interpretation to a large extent—often mere logomachy—verbal distinction, or “tithings of mint and anise.”

But it must be that there is an essence of Christianity which, rejected, places the rejecter beyond its pale. No one doubts that the atheist cannot with propriety call himself a Christian or be called so by others. Is that stage reached when one rejects Christ as the Son of God, a messenger from heaven, to establish the divine kingdom on the earth? Is it reached when one denies supernatural revelation in the Holy Scriptures? Is it reached when one declares that Christ was a mere man; when he asserts that he fulfilled no prophecies; that prophecy is itself a mere myth; that he wrought no miracles; that he spoke no word directly delivered to him of God; that his teachings have no other authority or source than the teachings of any other good man; that there are no divine vouchers for him or his doctrines; that the works ascribed to him were fabulous or merely occult human performances; that he did not rise from the dead; that the large part of the New Testament is exaggeration, and in substance fable? When these things are avowed and wrought into a creed does charity require us to call the creed a Christian creed, and estop us from characterizing it as a fatal departure from Christianity itself?

Wherein is it Christian? On what principle is the Christian Church required to admit its claim to the fellowship of believers? Let it be that its pulpit teaches good morals; that it even installs Christ as its Master in ethics; that it presents him as an example to be imitated; that it sets him forth as the

most perfect man of all time ; that it even calls him the dear Christ ; that it even goes yet further, so far as to invoke blessings in his name, or even by accident occasionally speaks of him as the Lord our Saviour ; that it in some exalted moments ascribes authority to him, but all the time holding the above creed and denouncing orthodoxy, a name even detested as an ignorant superstition only to be tolerated until growing intelligence will banish it from the earth. Are we on such grounds to admit its claim to be Christian ?

What Christ is this whose name it takes ? In what age and place was it that he lived ? Where are his teachings found ? He is certainly not the Son of Mary who was ^{What Christ is the Christ of such a creed ?} begotten of the Holy Ghost ; who came down from heaven and appeared in human flesh ; who fulfilled the ancient prophecies ; who was inaugurated at the Jordan by a voice from the open heaven, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased ;" who healed the sick and raised the dead ; who, having been put to death, on the third day rose from the dead, and ascended visibly in the presence of many witnesses into heaven, whence he is to come again at the end of ages to judge the quick and the dead. It is not this Christ who declares of himself that he made the world. This creed declares Christ to be a fable. It renounces him. It declares that in fact there never was such a Christ. On what principle is it that it assumes his name ? This is the Christ which the Christian Church has worshiped from the time of John and Peter and Paul to this time. Thence it derives its name, first assumed at Antioch eighteen hundred years ago. Whence do these Liberal Christians, so called, get their Christ ? Whose son is he ? When and where did he live and teach ? Where is the account of his life and doctrines ? Their Christ wrought no miracles, they say. Their Christ fulfilled no prophecies, they say. Their Christ delivers no messages from

God, they say. They will do a good work in clearing the religious atmosphere of clouds of error and misunderstanding if they will inform the age where they find their Christ.

Will they refer us to the New Testament for him? In what part of the sacred volume is his character delineated? Having discarded the book in its substance, on what principle do they retain any part of it? These are questions which ought to be answered. And the attempt to answer them will result in this: first, that the name Christian, which they assume, ought to be explained as being a mere pseudonym under which subtlety to propagate pagan doctrines; that the Christ whose name they bear is not the Christ who lived in Judea eighteen hundred years ago, and from whom the Christian ages and the Christian world derive their name, and by whom Christian civilization has grown—the root of the topmost reaches of humanity in all excellence and beauty; of the influences which have refined and purified mankind wherever it has gone; of the inspirations from which come all heroic sacrifice for the realization of an ideal; all hope for time, and reaching beyond time; the Christianity of the apostles and the glorious company of the martyrs, and of the men and women who to-day are contending for the faith once delivered to the saints, and who by their ministry and work are making the desert-world bloom, and who, unhindered, would speedily give it a Sabbath and a Church for every child of man, with the Sermon on the Mount for its law, and the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians for its chart for eternity. It ought to be explained that it is not this Christ—the Christ whom the martyr St. Stephen saw in vision when amid the shower of the murderous stones heaven opened, and he saw Jesus sitting at the right hand of God; not the Christ to whom the innumerable company of dying saints have looked, as with

What part of the Bible reveals the Christ of Liberal Christianity.

The assumption of the name Christian ought to be explained.

peace and hope they have entered and passed through the vale of death singing,

“I would not live alway; no, welcome the tomb!
Since Jesus hath lain there I dread not its gloom:”

not this Christ, but a Christ who is a pure myth; not an ancient myth even—a Christ not heard of by the ancients, but a Christ who is a modern myth—a creature of the fancy, a Christ that never lived, a dream, a sheer invention, a decoy. It ought to be explained that the Christ of this new creed is a substitute for the real Christ, and that the name Christian is adopted, and the Bible retained and placed upon the pulpit as a snare for the unwary, and that the so-called Christianity does not pretend to be a divine system of religious doctrine, nor in any proper sense a religion at all: that it claims no authority whatever except that of a pure human invention; that it is a philosophy, a sort of natural theism—*naturalism*; that it claims no light from the other world, and does not undertake to shed any upon it; that it does not help in any way in the problem of duty and destiny beyond the dreaming power of man; that the name of Christ has been attached to it because it finds in a mythic book legends about a person who is falsely said to have lived and done wonderful things, and around whose name of witchery an enchantment has gathered; and because the name will be reassuring to some who are not entirely disenthralled from the superstition which the name inspires—who still need a pulpit, and hymns, and prayers, and a talismanic name, even if it is a myth.

This class of deniers of miracles and all revelation embarrass the case more than open blasphemers. Their claim of a sort of cousinship is so kind, they are so full of compliments, they are so respectable, that it seems hard to tear the mask from them and banish them as spies and traitors from the camp.

They stab the Christ of God so deftly, with such a Judas kiss, with such honeyed words of compliment, right in the house of his friends; the death-dealing blade is so beautifully decorated that it seems heartless to object to the assassination; the victim so artistically decorated, so beautifully prepared and adorned for the sacrifice, that it seems a cruelty to arrest the crucifixion. After all, have they not a crucified Christ? Who dare say that the Christ of Calvary was ever more murderously hung upon the gibbet, more murderously put to death, than he is now by these high-priests of the liberal faith, who crucify him every Lord's day, driving the stiletto, after the prayer and hymn, with the honeyed words "our dear Saviour" on the tongue, through the pericardium to the center of the heart?

Surely it is a misnomer to call the liberalism which denies the supernaturalism of the prophecies and the fact of miracles Christianity. It may be honest, may be learned, The name a misnomer. may deserve to be treated with respect—the culmination of philosophy—as a human invention or discovery, but it ought not to be called Christian or Christianity. If the name of Christ must, in the judgment of its promulgators the esoteric prophets, for any reason be associated with it, or if it is important for some occult reason known to the esoteric priests to indicate its relation to Christ, there is a better way, it seems to us, as, for example, let it be called, instead of "Liberal Christianity," "Antichrist," or the "Unchristian Creed," or the "Church of the Crucifixion of Christ," or "Christ a Fiction," or "Christianity without Christ." If it must clothe itself in forms of worship for any reason, let its sacred places be styled something that indicates that they are infidel temples, in which Christ is specifically traduced and rejected, spit upon and contemned. Some one of these names is suggested if the creed must make reference to Christ or Christianity. If the reference may be omitted, and the ism simply take its place

among isms as a new phase of faith or no faith, like any other of the numerous isms, then it might be called Naturalism, or Deism, or the "Latest Ism." This last would perhaps be best, as more in harmony with its claims as the last result of thought—the best thing out; or it might borrow or restore the name adopted in France in the heyday of the *illuminati* during the Reign of Terror—the "Worship of Reason." We suggest for the greater glory of this new sect that some one of these names be adopted or a better one invented, and that it be formally announced, and that the new religion be inaugurated with ceremonies and a ritual befitting it. Mohammedanism has its mosque, Confucianism its pagoda, Judaism its temple, Christianity its church. Perhaps some other name could distinguish the place where these new rites are performed and these new doctrines are promulgated; why not Temple of Reason? Instead of the Bible and the prayers and hymns now in use, the new sect might for its expurgated and more rational worship invent new songs and new prayers which make no reference to Christ or the Bible. Why not place Shakespeare in the new pulpit, or Robert Elsmere, or some one of the numerous books of jest or wit and wisdom? or a selection might be made from the latest works on science.

Whether the new sect would demand a stated time for its rites we have no means of knowing. If it might be deemed desirable, they could select a day as their sacred day, say Friday. This would serve several purposes: it would be a clear mark of distinction; it would be a test of their power; it would serve to indicate their growth in public favor, and place before us distinctly the beneficial effects of the new religion, as they would unfold forever its working.

The Christian Church, or Christianity, on the authority of its Founder believes in miracles. It believes in the miracle of

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inspired prophecy ; believes in the miracle of a divine incarnation ; believes in a religion which in its substance of doctrine has been handed down from heaven in a revelation miraculously delivered of God to men ; believes in a Christ who, miraculously conceived of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the blessed Virgin, was the incarnate Son of God, who, while on earth, wrought innumerable miracles by the immediate power of God to accredit him and authenticate his doctrines ; who, though crucified, dead, and buried, miraculously rose from the dead, and who after many days miraculously ascended visibly into heaven, whence he will come again to judge the quick and the dead. This is for essence the Christian faith, without which, in substance, no one has a right to the Christian name, since the name imports this faith, and is misleading when it is assumed in the absence of the faith. Christianity is the outgrowth of this faith. There never would have been a Christian Church on earth but for this faith. The extinction of the faith would be the extinction of the system, and the substitution of something else for it.

We have already offered in support of this thesis the argument founded on prophecy, an argument which we believe cannot be invalidated, and which must forever be one of the indispensable proofs of Christianity—so essential that were it removed nothing remaining could support the system.

We now enter upon the examination of this second great argument on which the system depends, and must forever depend, for its support ; which if it be not sound convicts it not simply of error but imposture—the argument from miracle.

It is worthy of notice that in the system these two arguments stand or fall together ; one is not valid without the other. There might have been the evidence of prophecy without the evidence of miraculous works had God so planned. The

prophecies would have been adequate attestations because they themselves are miracles, and only as they are miracles; but the prophecies must be fulfilled in order that they become proof; that is, in order that they show themselves to be miracles, or the product of direct supernatural agency. This alone would show them to be supernatural. But when the prophecies included predictions that the Messiah would be a worker of miracles, the miracle of superadded supernatural works became necessary to the fulfillment of prophecy. The prophecy could not stand without the added miracle. Take away the miracle and we should have this anomaly—a Messiah attested by some fulfilled prophecy and convicted of imposture, or embarrassed by unfulfilled prophecy. To make the attestation complete it must be complete in both parts.

We have found that the prophecy was complete as to every particular except the miraculous attestation which was to be furnished by the Messiah himself. The present argument undertakes to show that this, which was necessary to full completeness, is not wanting. The Messiah, who fulfilled the predictions in every other respect, fulfilled them also in this respect: he was a worker of miracles.

What is a miracle? A miracle is any effect wrought by the immediate agency of God for the purpose of accrediting a person as a messenger of God in respect of some claim he avows, or for the purpose of attesting some doctrine Miracle defined. or doctrines or announcement which he delivers. Any effect produced by the direct agency of God, but not in his ordinary method of working, would be in a sense a miracle, but not in the sense in which the term is technically used. The object for which the work is wrought enters into the Christian definition.

This definition excludes all effects occurring under natural law, whether ordinary or extraordinary, at stated or irregular

intervals. By "occurring under natural law" is meant, effects provided for in the system of nature and requiring no other agency, and in no other form than that which is employed in conducting its orderly movement. Excludes effects under natural law. These orderly effects, it is held, are wrought by the immanent agency of God—the entire system is created and operated by him; but, though wrought by him, the effects lack the element of miracle by being provided for under an established system, and by being part of the on-going of a fixed and permanent order. They declare his agency, but do not accredit a person whom he sends or establish a doctrine which he delivers; and since they exist and transpire entirely irrespective of a particular person, or of any utterance he can make, they are not in the Christian sense miraculous.

This definition excludes all effects wrought by secondary agents, whether we include under the term "secondary agents" things or persons other than God; that is to say, Excludes effects by secondary agents. it excludes any effect which results from any force which is concrete in things, or found to be inherent in things, called natural force, operated or operating under a fixed order; and any effect produced by any created person by any power vested in him as a creature, any and every thing that he is able to do of himself.

This definition excludes all mere marvels, the source of which we are not able to trace, but which do not furnish the proof that they are wrought by the immediate agency of God for the purposes specified, namely, Excludes mere marvels. for the accrediting of a person as to a claim he makes, or of attesting a doctrine which he delivers.

The definition includes every effect wrought by the agency of God for the purposes stated; but while the definition requires that God should be the immediate agent, and that the effect should be wrought for the purposes stated, it allows the effects

to be wrought through and by a secondary agent by lending to him the use of a power which he does not in himself possess.

The effect wrought may be upon things or upon persons, and natural forces may be subordinated and employed to produce them: they may be either by the reversal, or suspension, or new direction, or transcendence of natural laws, but whether in one of these forms or another, or yet some other, they must, to be a miracle in the Christian use of the term, show the immediate agency of God in a supernatural way for the purpose stated.

The philosophy of miracles is, that they are effects wrought in or upon the system of nature by the Author of the system for the accomplishment of ends not provided for under its orderly and permanent operations. They The philosophy of miracles. do not imply any defect in the scheme of nature for the purposes for which it was established; but they do imply that its Author has higher ends, for the accomplishment of which, as occasion exists, he may so operate upon it and through it as to make known his agency in new and exceptional forms. Nature, his creature, thus becomes his servant to bring about results which are above and beyond its established processes, for ends higher than the ends it ordinarily serves.

The ends thus accomplished are not unforeseen ends, but ends provision for which are held in abeyance until, in the developing stages of his plan, the occasion for them arises. When the time comes and the foreseen exigency appears, his power introduces the now-wanted effect to meet the demand of the foreseen need. Miracle is as much a part of his eternal plan, when the occasion arrives, as the ordinary processes are in the regular on-going of the system. The miracle is outside of the operation of the fixed system, but it is a part of the infinite plan, which is broader than the provisions of the natural system. The demand for miracle does not arise from any defects of the

system. In it there never could arise a necessity for any change —any tampering with its laws. For its purposes it Miracles do not imply defects of the system. is perfect. The occasion for miracle arises from the needs of an order of creation that is above the sweep of its laws—free personal beings. Miracle, in carrying forward government over them, and in bringing them on to their pre-arranged destiny, becomes normal. It is simply the Infinite Creator coming to them as the foreseen exigencies of their nature demand, when the time for his so coming arrives.

In the definition, we have said that “miracle is for the purpose of accrediting a person in the matter of some particular claim he avows, or for attesting some doctrine or doctrines he delivers.” Thus miracle becomes proof of the doctrine of revelation as well as of the supernatural agency employed.

It is sometimes asked, Is not a truth a truth, whether so attested or not, and wherefore then the miracle? And again it is asked, How a miracle proves a doctrine. How does a miracle prove a doctrine? These are both important questions. To the first we answer, Yes, a truth is a truth whether attested or not, or whether revealed or not, and the same in the one case as the other; but it may be impossible for us to know it to be a truth unless revealed, and unless the proof of miracle is furnished: and yet it may be important that we should know it to be true, and so it becomes indispensable that God should attest it. To the second question, How does a miracle prove a doctrine to be true? we answer, The miracle is God’s testimony that it is true, and his testimony so delivered establishes it. There may be no relation at all between the miracle itself and the doctrine by which the one establishes the other; but the miracle becomes proof because it is God’s seal. It is the fact that miracle is this testimony or sanction to the doctrine which establishes it.

Dr. Barnes well and wisely says: “It is not difficult to

distinguish a miracle from an ordinary event, and it is not necessary, in order to obtain that idea, to assume that it is a suspension of the laws of nature, as theologians have commonly affirmed it to be, or a violation of the laws of nature, as Mr. Hume was pleased to affirm, or even the introduction of a higher law of nature adjusted to the occasion, as Dr. Thomas Brown seems to have regarded it. If there are laws of nature already in operation in relation to that in which the miracle is performed, of course those laws would be 'suspended' for the time. Whether in any case there would be a 'violation' of those laws, or whether all that there is in the case is the introduction of higher laws, are points which, perhaps, are above us, and which would not, at any rate, help us in understanding the real nature of a miracle. The idea is, that the only antecedent in the case is the divine will, the divine power. That is all that enters into the result. That covers and explains all." * "The particular idea, as connected with the evidence of revealed religion, is, that this power is put forth in attestation of one who claims to be a messenger from heaven, or in the establishment of some doctrine or truth to be believed by men." The exceptional exercise of the divine power in producing a unique effect is called a miracle, rather than his uniform working, simply because, in this way, he can and does give a direct attestation of a special messenger or message. Every operation of nature points to him, and is a miracle of his power: but we reserve the word miracle to denote some special manifestation of his power, out of the ordinary course of events, which serves as a direct proof of his agency for attesting a special doctrine or servant of his.

Miracle, of course, excludes all tricks, all mere wonders, all results of known or unknown natural causes, all occasional or

* Barnes, "Evidences of Christianity," p. 152.

exceptional outcroppings of occult and latent forces in the system of nature, all works merely superhuman which might be performed by finite beings of larger power, all merely inexplicable works, which may result either from some unique knowledge possessed by the performers or some force the nature of which is unknown either to the performers or any body else. There are probably marvels of these kinds. A miracle is not one of them. If there ever was a miracle performed, it was a work which transcends all these, and must be able to show that it does before it can be of any value. Should a man or any creature appear who by extraordinary knowledge of natural laws could do wondrous things without number, and should it be impossible to detect how he did them, and should he seemingly have absolute power over nature, and yet should his work in fact be simply the result of his superior knowledge of nature and use of her hidden laws and ways of working unknown to others, it would have not a single element of miracle in it, whatever it might be: would furnish no proof of supernatural presence, would be wholly within nature, and could be accounted for by nature if we possessed adequate knowledge. The same would be true should some superior being to man work through man, by some power he might possess over him, things strictly superhuman, but not beyond the natural power of such a creature through man. It would still all fall within the natural, and would lack the character of a real miracle. It is not certain that there are not superhuman agents, or that they do not sometimes possess men, and work marvels through them, of the source of which the human instrument may be ignorant. If such do exist, they have a perilous power, and its use must be limited and under divine control, and such that it does not necessitate the idea of divine agency. Marvelous healings and occult mesmeric and seemingly spiritualistic phenomena—such as mind-reading, clairvoyance, and pos-

sibly the production of sounds and movements in physical things—may result from unknown laws, and do not necessarily imply miracle. But a true miracle is God's own sign-manual, which, however it may be counterfeited, in the genuine is capable of absolute proof, and must be able to make itself appear genuine. The question now is, Is there proof of genuine miracles, and what are these proofs?

Are we to suppose that an occasion ever would exist for such an exercise of such supernatural agency? Have effects of this kind ever been produced? What do they prove? Has God ever appeared to man in a work which no finite being could perform for the purpose of attesting his presence with the man and his approval of him, or of some deliverance he made? To this query one answer is inevitable: either he has so appeared or he has never given a revelation to man, and man has never come to a knowledge of truths which transcend his natural power to acquire; for such a revelation must itself be a miracle. And he has never given adequate proof that the revelation, if given, is a revelation, or that its contents are true. Any thing assuming to be a revelation, having no such attest as miracle, is unworthy of belief as to the fact that it is a revelation, whatever may be the fact as to the truth of its contents. If, on the other hand, an assumed revelation has been attested by such signs as seem, after the fairest examination, to be miraculous, in proportion as that is true the proof is such that reason requires we should accept it as a revelation; the proof may rise to such a height that to doubt becomes irrational, and even impossible, while to deny would outrage the constitution of the mind itself. If yet it should not be a revelation, it would only show that the Creator had so made the mind—if, indeed, there be a Creator—that the best use of its faculties lead it to the direst delusion; has so made it, that in

Would miracles occur.

order to escape the most fatal error it must refuse to admit the highest apparent proof, and disbelieve the evidence which is naturally the most convincing to its faculties. "Whatever may be the difference of opinion as to the fact of such a divine interposition, there can be none on the question whether such a power, if exerted, would be a sufficient confirmation of a claim to a divine mission, or to the truth of a doctrine proposed to the faith of mankind. Men are so made that they could not believe otherwise, nor can they reason themselves into a contrary belief. Here, at least, the limits of skepticism are fixed and settled. God would not give this power to an impostor, nor would he put it forth in defense of a falsehood. Men may believe that there is no God, but they cannot believe that if there be a God he would raise the dead to confirm a lie or to deceive mankind. Whatever may be the views of God—Fetich, Polytheistic, Monotheistic, Deistic, Christian, Mohammedan, Buddhist, Trinitarian, Unitarian—they all agree in this. They are so made that they cannot think otherwise."* The whole question, therefore, is, Have miracles been wrought in support of the claims of revelation? In disproof of miracles, it is alleged, first, that the thing supposed is impossible. If this could be shown, of course, it would close the argument. If it cannot be shown it ought not to be alleged. If it is alleged simply as a make-weight it is unworthy. We must assume that those who employ it believe it to be true. It is a question for the reason to decide. Is the belief that a miracle is impossible a more rational belief than the opposite?

Why are we to suppose a miracle impossible? The atheist, who believes there is no God, may answer, A miracle is impossible, because it assumes the existence of a power above nature; but there is no such power. Admit his premises, and the answer is logical. The pantheist, who finds God the

Miracles not
impossible.

* Barnes, "Evidences of Christianity."

necessary outcome of nature, and not other from it, may answer, There is no power other than nature, and nature has no power over itself; therefore, there can be no miracle or supernatural working. The answer again is logical. Both the atheist and pantheist have a right—yea, a necessity—to deny the possibility of miracle. The argument with them has a different issue. It is not a question whether a miracle is possible according to their theory, but rather, Is their theory true, by which a miracle becomes impossible? That discussion is fully elaborated under the head of Theism. But on what ground can a theist deny the possibility of miracle? He assumes in this discussion the validity of the theistic postulates, “There is a God—the universe is the product of his eternal power and wisdom.” The thesis involves, to begin with, that there was no universe, but only God alone; that solely of himself he made it, with all its contents; that all that is in it he put in it—it was all a supernatural product; that is, the whole work was effected by a power that was above and behind and extra to that which was made—a power that did not emanate from the thing made, but which existed independently of it, and operated to give it existence; that, therefore, the whole power displayed in nature is supernatural; the word nature representing only a definable set of products and methods which was established and uniform, the whole being a vast congeries of miracles. If this assumption of the theist be true, how utterly absurd it becomes to say that a miracle now is impossible. Is it thinkable that He who made all things has now no power to do any thing that has not been done already? Has the primal effort completely and forever exhausted him? Does he continue to hold the planets in their orbits and perpetuate the sidereal heavens, and conserve all nature in its undiminished harmony, and yet has he no power to suspend one of the laws, or change one of the outcomes? Did he originate life; and all its curious and many-functioned organ-

isms, and has he now no power to cure a diseased or heal a maimed limb or gland by direct forth-putting of power? If he should wish to manifest his approval of a messenger or doctrine, has nature so exhausted or fettered him that he can do no one thing which will show that it is he that does it? We intuitively know that, if there be a God who is the author of all, it cannot be impossible for him to still work in new and exceptional methods if it might be his pleasure to do so. The greater must include the less.

But if it is said he will not, or, more mildly still, there is no probability that he will work a miracle, that raises an entirely different question. What we demand, in the name of reason, is that the fatuity shall not be allowed which says he cannot.

On what ground is it assumed that he probably will never work a miracle? There ought to be strong and ready reasons for so bold and often-repeated an assertion. What Miracles not improbable. are the *prima facie* proofs? Is it a necessary induction from any known premises? or is it an intuition that he would at first found a system so complete that it would preclude any after-modifying action upon or within it forever? Does it follow that, because there is a general uniformity, there will never be a novelty? that because he pursues the same line of action for ages he may not introduce other but not contradictory lines in after ages?

Is it said that the suggestion implies imperfection or defect in the original plan, and the need of mending or modifying it, which is derogatory to divine wisdom; that it supposes the plan liable to be changed on account of unforeseen exigencies, thus reducing the creative wisdom to a mutable and changeful expediency? But this is not so—the theory involves nothing of the kind. Miracles are not changes of the

economy of nature to improve its defects. They imply no unforeseen exigency or remedy of a previous blunder. They disturb no harmony. They, on the contrary, are harmless interferences with, or hinderances of, a permanent harmony, simply to proclaim the presence of the Author of the harmony, that he may give proper and impressive sanction to a revelation he wishes to make to a creature whose nature was originally made to need and receive it. It is simply carrying out his original plan, and not a mending of it springing from the discovery of an unforeseen defect. He knew when he made minds that in bringing them along to their end, into the various stages of their progress, he would need to make revelations to them, and establish the communication by just such miracles as he has employed for that purpose. It is no blunder, but a beautiful harmony.

Suppose it should turn out, as these same objectors teach, and as revelation abundantly shows, that his plan is a progressive plan: might not the progressive movement involve miracle? Suppose that it should turn out that there Occasion for miracle. are many distinct creations at wide intervals: would not supernatural interference in such a case be shown to be a law of action, or an inclusion of his plan which would be forever outcropping in the history of his personal work? Suppose that after creating the material universe he should conclude to create intelligent beings on it: might not the new and added order produce new and added wants which the old order would not supply, and to supply which might require an interference with the old order to prove that the author of the new is also the master of the old; or, if not to interfere or change the old, might he not add something to it? Would it not be in the highest harmony with what we know of him in the old order that he should add something to meet the demands of

the new order; or that he should so work upon the old as to show that he was adjusting it to the new?

Suppose the new creation should differ from the old as a clod differs from a mind, as a moral agent differs from an automatic machine—is it unreasonable to suppose that he would adopt exceptional ways of treating it? If its nature were such as to require that it should know its law, might he not take some method to declare it, and make the creature know that it was he that declared it? Can any one see that there is intrinsic improbability that he would employ supernatural methods to attest his deliverances—to convince the creature that the imposed law was neither a mere conceit of his own finite and erring faculty, nor yet a mere device of others, as fallible as himself, to oppress or govern him, but a revelation of God?

Suppose it should be that this new creature was designed for immortality, and that its highest welfare required that it should know things of the mind of its Maker which cannot readily, or even at all, be found out by any natural source of information within its reach, is it incredible that he would supply the want in an extra-natural way? Are these things so *prima facie* certain that it can be with any propriety asserted that supernatural help is not to be expected? We must think such a case is not made out. On the other hand, if we can rise to an unprejudiced examination, the very opposite will appear the reasonable conclusion, and the probability of a supernatural deliverance become exactly as high as the demand for it becomes urgent. That man needs such help there can be no doubt. This has been shown already. He may, and indeed does, beyond all question, by the right and natural use of his faculties, become aware of the existence of his Maker. In the same way, without doubt, he becomes conscious of his per-

sonal responsibility. By the same use of his reason he attains the idea, and reaches a more or less firm belief, of his immortality, but no one can pretend that additional light is not desirable on all these points. His own struggles and doubts and fears take sides against him. The history of the race, its idolatries, superstitions, and low and groveling fancies, is an unbroken protest. If the interests of the eternity which follows death transcend those which pertain to a life in the flesh—if the unseen is more august than the seen—if the life here and now in some way comprises that beyond—surely these realities would in some way be communicated more fully than we find them to be in the natural world. And where is the incredibility in the theory that he that made mind with such wants would vouchsafe the information, and clothe it with the authority of his direct sanction? We know by painful consciousness that every human soul has cravings to know something of his thought. He made this longing; did he do it to torture us? Is it *prima facie* that he will never gratify it? A word would be as life from the dead: will he never speak it? On what pretense is it assumed that he would not communicate to us in words? He so made us that certain—and the most important—ideas and information should be made known to us by words, directly and exclusively. Why must we suppose that he will not employ this instrument? Is not he the author of language, and shall he preclude himself from using it? If it should be said that language is not an endowment, but a human creation, is it not still true that He who created man so created him that he should be a linguistic creature—that is, that he should need language and have power to invent it? And can He who made the need not understand the use? If language serves a purpose for an end, cannot he who created the power for its use himself also employ it? Some truths can be made known in no other way, and these

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the greatest truths of all; or if by possibility they might be imparted in some other manner, the natural and most adequate medium is language—the completest if not the only servitor of thought. Many revelations were made by signs and visions, but the deepest and most important are those communicated by words spoken to the consciousness by the Holy Ghost, or pronounced by the lips of Incarnate Wisdom.

There is a revelation in nature. Nature speaks to us of God and from God. This use of the word is justly criticised as tending to confusion, but duly explained it is proper. Nature reveals God. Nature is God's work. The work discloses the mind of the workman so far as it has meaning, and so far as its meaning can be ascertained. The significance may be narrow and obscure, but it makes known something of him, and so far it is a revelation, and we know it to be authoritative only because it is his work. It is his discovered presence with it, and in it, that authenticates what nature teaches. The proof is supernatural even here; that is, nature becomes a teacher only because it is an effect of the supernatural and pervaded by the supernatural, and so manifesting a thought and power which are not of itself, but above and beyond itself. So the word must have the same supernatural attest. It must be a word of God, and we must be able to know that it is before it can be clothed with his authority, or in any true sense have the force of a revelation. Thus it appears that against the probability of miracles absolutely nothing can be alleged—that their improbability, *prima facie*, does not appear, nor can any thing be adduced that makes for that conclusion. It has no other foundation than sheer assumption, while for their probability there are many and adequate reasons—such as to create a just expectation of their occurrence. Accordingly, we find a predisposition or natural tendency of the mind to expect them on all occasions

of special divine manifestation. The proof is, that mind as mind, unbiased by prejudice on *à priori* grounds, or under some original impulse, assumes their probable occurrence. They belong to the highest conception of the plan of the universe. Nature is one stage of divine manifestation, one method of divine work, but not the only. God has other methods, and nature itself lays the foundation for other methods. He will continue, there is reason to believe, to make new revelations at suitable intervals, possibly to coming generations of men on earth, possibly to the race in the new conditions of eternity. And whatever revelations are made there will be supernatural signs to show that he is Revealer, and there will be perfect harmony in all revelations from beginning to end, past, present, and future, whether delivered in word or work.

Should he so communicate with us, is it not certain that he would adopt the method that would be most convincing that it was He who made the communication? Are we to suppose that he would be indifferent on this point? From his relations to us, is it not manifestly a duty that he should communicate with us, and that he should not leave us in just doubt as to the source? If so, what attest could he adopt but some sign which would proclaim him in unmistakable terms and method? Surely the supposition that he would is reasonable. It is certain that the revelation, if given, could not stand without miracle—it could not be rationally accepted without it. Those who deny miracle will understand this. They know that if this credential can be destroyed the foundation is removed, and that so long as it remains intact no machination against it can prevail. The miracle is not only a possible proof if vouchsafed—it is proof absolute and irresistible—it is the direct testimony of God himself. Clearly given, no doubt can stand before it. The whole battle must be fought around the question, not of its adequacy, but of its reality. The very conclusiveness of the proof is

prima facie assertion of the probability that it would be employed. If God were about to communicate he would undoubtedly use the miraculous method. Suppose, for any reason, that God did propose to make a deliverance to man which it was important men should know, and which they had no power to know of themselves, and of the truth of which, even when suggested, they could have no natural proof, or any proof except as it should be made to appear that it was his deliverance, how could he proceed without miracle? Say it is an incarnation of himself, such as is declared to have taken place, how could he establish it without miracle? Say it is an inspired deliverance—that is, an immediate communication to the minds of some men, how could they or he confirm it without miracle? There is, then, *prima facie* probability of miracles in the exact ratio of the probability that God would ever communicate knowledge of certain truths to men. The needs of men and the nature of God both declare them probable; justice not less than love furnishes *a priori* grounds for their occurrence. The creation of immortal beings places the Creator under obligation to treat them according to the needs he invests in them.

Is the revelation supported by miracle? Has the adequate proof been thus furnished that it is a revelation? This, after Has miracle all, is the real question. Here, again, we are met with been furnished? a third difficulty, which it seems necessary to notice before we proceed with the argument in support of the actual occurrence of miracles. It is alleged that, admitting the possibility, and even probability, of miracles, and even admitting their actual occurrence, it would be impossible to establish it by testimony; that, therefore, a miracle could only be of evidential value to the actual witness of it. This objection has occupied too much space in Christian apologetics. It was the invention of Mr. Hume. Its history in his mind is singular enough.

It is alleged that no human testimony can equal the demands in the case—that is, that a miracle, if it actually occurred in the presence of any number of witnesses, and under such conditions that they should actually know it to be miraculous, their testimony could not make it credible to those who did not witness it. The argument in its best form is by Mr. Hume. It has occupied so great space that no discussion of the subject seems complete if it be not noticed, even though it be clear that it has already received unmerited attention. It has rarely occurred that so plausible an argument has proved, upon examination, so utterly worthless in so many particulars.*

Testimony can
prove a mir-
acle.

The argument which has given rise to so much criticism is unique for its apparent force but real weakness; its startling seeming-conclusiveness of the whole controversy about miracles, but utter failure to be of any value in the case; its show of close and compact logic, but its actual transparent begging of the whole question, is, on examination, perfectly apparent. The history of mental struggle on the great fields of debate will perhaps furnish not a single case of so pompous a sham, at once confusing and dangerously misleading, and yet impotent and imbecile. We give his own words. “A miracle,” he says, “supported by any human testimony, is more properly a subject of derision than of argument.” This sentence might justify the conclusion that he knew the weakness of the sophism, so he immediately subjoins: “*No testimony*

Hume's argu-
ment.

* While he lived at La Flèche, a Jesuit plied him with some nonsensical miracles performed lately in their convent, and then and there occurred to him the famous argument which he afterward published against miracles. As my head was full of the topics of the “Treatise of Human Nature,” which I was at the time composing, the argument immediately occurred to me, and I thought it very much graveled my companion; but at last he observed to me that it was impossible for that argument to have any validity because it operated equally against the Gospel as the Catholic miracles, which observation I thought fit to admit as a sufficient answer.—“Scottish Philosophy,” by McCosh, p. 121.

for any kind of miracle can ever possibly amount to any kind of probability." Yet before he closed his argument he submitted a case of proof, which, he said, would be ample: "We establish it as a maxim that no human testimony can have such force as to prove a miracle, and make a just foundation for any system of religion. . . Our belief or assurance of any fact from the report of eye-witnesses is derived from no other principle than experience; that is, our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the reports of witnesses. Now, if the fact attested partakes of the marvelous—if it is such as has seldom fallen under our own observation—here is a contest of two opposite experiences, of which the one destroys the other as far as its force goes. Further, if the fact affirmed by the witness, instead of being only marvelous is really miraculous; if, besides, the testimony, considered apart and in itself, amounts to an entire proof, in that case there is proof against proof, of which the stronger must prevail. A miracle is a violation of the laws of nature; and as a firm and unalterable experience has established these laws, the proof against a miracle, from the very nature of the fact, is as entire as any argument from experience can possibly be imagined. And if so, it is an undeniable consequence that it cannot be surmounted by any proof whatever for testimony. A miracle, therefore, however attested, can never be rendered credible even in the lowest degree." The argument has been fully and ably answered by many writers, but it has become so widely known as a staple commodity of skeptical thought that no discussion of miracles could be deemed complete without some reference to it. Nothing new can be said when the best minds have plowed the subject over and over again. We therefore avail ourselves of the reply of Dr. Alexander, quoting without modification from his able work on "Evidences of Christianity." He says:

Alexander's reply to Hume.

“Here we have the substance of Mr. Hume’s argument, on which I propose to make some remarks, intended to show that its whole plausibility depends on the assumption of false principles, and the artful use of equivocal terms.

“1. Some prejudice is created in the mind of the unsuspecting reader by the definition of a miracle here given. It is called ‘a violation of the laws of nature,’ which carries with it an unfavorable idea, as though some obligation were violated and some injury done. But the simple truth is, that the laws of nature are nothing else than the common operations of divine power in the government of the world, which depend entirely for their existence and continuance on the divine will : and a miracle is nothing else than the exertion of the same power in a way different from that which is common ; or it may be a mere suspension of that power which is commonly observed to operate in the world.

“2. Mr. Hume’s argument will apply to the evidence of the senses as well as to that derived from testimony, and will prove (if it prove any thing) that it would be impossible to believe in a miracle if we should witness it ever so often. ‘The very same principle of experience,’ says he, ‘which gives us a certain degree of assurance in the testimony of witnesses gives us also, in this case, another degree of assurance against the fact which they endeavor to establish, from which contradiction there arises necessarily a counterpoise, and mutual destruction of belief and authority.’ The very same counterpoise and mutual destruction of belief must also occur between the assurance derived from the senses and that derived from experience. The reason why testimony cannot be believed in favor of a miracle is not, according to Mr. Hume, because it has no force, for taken by itself it may be sufficient to produce assurance ; but let this assurance be as strong as it may, it cannot be stronger than that derived from universal experience. ‘In that case,’ says he,

‘there is proof against proof.’ It is evident that, upon these principles, the same *equilibrium* from contradictory evidence must take place between experience and the senses. If one evidence be stronger than another, ‘the stronger must prevail, but with a diminution of force in proportion to that of its antagonist.’ But in the case of the senses and a firm and unalterable experience, the evidence is perfect on both sides, so that the ‘counterpoise and mutual destruction of belief’ must occur. According to this metaphysical balance of Mr. Hume, a miracle could not be believed if we witnessed it ever so often; for though there is a great weight of evidence on each side, yet as there is an equilibrium neither can have any influence on our assent. Whether Mr. Hume would have objected to this conclusion does not appear; but it is manifest that it logically follows from his argument, as much as in the case to which he has applied it. And here we see to what a pitch of skepticism his reasoning leads.

“3. Mr. Hume makes an unnecessary distinction between that which is marvelous and that which is miraculous; for though there is a real difference, there is none as to his argument. The force of his reasoning does not relate to events as being miraculous, but as being opposite to universal experience. If the conclusion, therefore, be correct, it will equally prove that no testimony is sufficient to establish a natural event which has not before been experienced. If ever so many witnesses should aver that they had seen meteoric stones fall from the clouds, or the galvanic fluid melt metals, yet if we have never experienced these things ourselves we must not believe them.

“4. The opposite or contrary experience of Mr. Hume in regard to miracles can mean nothing more than that such things have not been experienced. There is no other opposite experience conceivable in this case, unless a number of persons present at the same time should experience opposite impres-

sions. The distinction which he artfully makes in relation to 'the king of Siam, who refused to believe the first reports concerning the effects of frost,' between that which is contrary to experience and that which is not conformable to experience, is without foundation. For a fact cannot be contrary to experience in any other way than by being not conformable to it. There neither is nor can be any experience against miracles except this, that they have not occurred in our own experience or that of others. When the proposition of our author is expressed in language free from ambiguity it will amount to this: that what has never been experienced can never be believed on any testimony; than which nothing can easily be conceived more false. In what a situation must man have been at the beginning of the world if he had adopted the principles of this skeptic!

"5. Mr. Hume uses the word experience in a twofold sense, changing from one to the other as best suits his purpose. Sometimes it means personal experience; and at other times, and more commonly, the experience of the whole world. Now if it be taken to mean our own individual experience, the argument will be that no fact which we ourselves have not witnessed can be established by testimony; which, if correct, would cut off at a stroke the greater part of human knowledge. Much the most numerous class of facts are those which we receive upon testimony of others, and many of these are entirely different from any thing that we have personally experienced. Many learned men never take the trouble to witness the most curious experiments in philosophy and chemistry; yet they are as well satisfied of their truth as if they had personal experience of it.

"But though an argument founded on an opposition between testimony and experience, in order to be of any validity must relate to personal experience, yet Mr. Hume commonly uses

the term to signify the experience of all men in all ages. This extensive meaning of the term must be the one which he affixes to it in most places of his essay; because it is experience by which we know that the laws of nature are uniform and unalterable; and he has given an example which clearly determines the sense of the word. 'That a dead man should come to life,' says he, 'has never been witnessed in any age or country.' Now, according to this use of the word, what he calls an argument is a mere assumption of the point in dispute; what logicians call a *petitio principii*, a begging of the question. For what is the question in debate? Is it not whether miracles have ever been experienced? And how does Mr. Hume undertake to prove that they never did exist? By an argument intended to demonstrate that no testimony can establish them; the main principle of which argument is, that all experience is against them. If miracles have ever occurred, they are not contrary to universal experience; for whatever has been witnessed at any time, by any person, makes part of universal experience. What sort of reasoning is it, then, to form an argument against the truth of miracles founded on the assumption that they never existed? If it be true, as he says, that it has never been witnessed in any age or country that a dead man should come to life, then indeed it is useless to adduce testimony to prove that the dead have on some occasions been brought to life. If he had a right to take this for granted, where was the use of such a parade of reasoning on the subject of testimony? The very conclusion to which he wished to come is here assumed as the main principle in the argument. It is, however, as easy to deny as to affirm; and we do utterly deny the truth of this position; so that after all we are at issue precisely on the point where we commenced. Nothing is proved by the argument which promised so much, except the skill of the writer in sophistical reasoning.

“6. Our author falls into another mistake in his reasoning. The object is to prove that testimony in favor of miracles can never produce conviction, because it is opposed by uniform and unalterable experience. But how do we know what this universal experience is? Is it not by testimony, except within the narrow circle of our own personal experience? Then it turns out that the testimony in favor of miracles is neutralized or overbalanced by other testimony. That is, to destroy the force of testimony, he assumes a principle founded on testimony. It is admitted, that when testimony is adduced to establish any facts, if other and stronger testimony can be brought against them their credibility is destroyed. But if I bring testimony for a fact, and some one alleges that he can show that this testimony is unworthy of credit because he can bring witnesses to prove that many persons in different countries and ages never saw any such thing, to such a person I would reply that even if these witnesses declared the truth, it could not overthrow the positive testimony which I had adduced, as they did not contradict the facts asserted; and besides, it must be determined which witnesses are the most credible, yours or mine. Just so it is in the case of Mr. Hume’s argument. He sets up uniform experience against testimony, and gives a preponderance to the former on the ground that witnesses are known sometimes to lie; but all that he knows of what has happened in other ages and countries is by testimony, and they who give this testimony are as fallible as others; therefore there existed no ground for preferring the evidence of experience to testimony. Besides, he is not in possession of testimony to establish a thousandth part of what has been experienced; and as far as it goes it amounts to no more than non-experience, a mere negative thing which can never have any weight to overthrow the testimony of positive witnesses. In a court of justice such a method of rebutting testimony would be rejected as totally inadmissible.

If we had sufficient evidence of a fact of any kind, *that* testimony would not be invalidated, if it could be proved that no person in the world had ever witnessed the like before. This want of previous experience naturally creates a presumption against the fact, which requires some force of evidence to overcome; but in all cases a sufficient number of witnesses of undoubted intelligence and veracity will be able to remove the presumption and produce conviction.

“7. Mr. Hume lays it down as a principle that our belief in testimony arises from ‘experience; that is, observation of the veracity of human testimony.’ But this is not correct. Our belief in testimony is as natural and constitutional as our belief in our senses. Children at first believe implicitly all that is told them, and it is from experience that they learn to distrust testimony. If our faith in testimony arose from experience it would be impossible to acquire any knowledge from instruction. If children were to believe nothing that was told them until they had made observations on the veracity of human testimony nothing would be believed; for they would never arrive at the maturity and judgment necessary to make observations on a subject so complicated.

“But although Mr. Hume’s object in wishing to establish this false principle was to exalt the evidence of what he calls experience above testimony; yet, if we should concede it to him, it could answer him no purpose, since we have shown that this experience itself depends on testimony. Whatever use he can make of this principle, therefore, against testimony, can be turned against himself, since his knowledge of what the experience of the world is can only be obtained by the report of witnesses who, in different ages, have observed the course of nature.

“8. Mr. Hume, on reflection, seems to have been convinced that his argument was unsound; for in a note appended to his

‘Essay on Miracles’ he makes a concession which entirely overthrows the whole. But mark the disingenuity (or shall I not rather call it the malignity?) which is manifested in this only evidence of his candor. He concedes that there may be miracles of such a kind as to admit of proof from human testimony, in direct contradiction to his reiterated maxim, and in complete oppugnance to all his reasoning; but he makes the concession with the express reservation that it shall not be applied to the support of religion. He, however, not only makes this concession, but gives an example of such miracles, and of the testimony which he admits to be sufficient to establish it. ‘Suppose,’ says he, ‘all authors in all languages agree that from the first of January, 1600, there was a total darkness all over the earth for eight days; suppose that the tradition of this event is still strong and lively among the people; that all travelers bring us accounts of the same tradition, etc., IT IS EVIDENT THAT OUR PHILOSOPHERS OUGHT TO RECEIVE IT FOR CERTAIN.’ And this is a part of the same essay in which it is said that ‘a miracle supported by any human testimony is more properly a subject of derision than of argument.’ ‘No kind of testimony for any kind of miracle can possibly amount to a probability, much less to a proof!’

“It might appear that, after so complete a renunciation of the principle which at first he so strenuously asserted, we might have spared ourselves the pains of a formal refutation. But not so. The author is resolved that his concession shall be of no service whatever to religion. Hear his own words: ‘But should this miracle be ascribed to any new system of religion, men in all ages have been so imposed upon by ridiculous stories of that kind that this very circumstance would be full proof of a cheat, and sufficient with all men of sense not only to make them reject the fact, but even to reject it without further examination.’ I have heard of a maxim, which I believe the

Jesuits introduced, that what is false in theology may be true in philosophy; but I never could have expected that a philosopher, a logician, and a metaphysician, too, would utter any thing so unreasonable and so marked with prejudice as the declaration just quoted. The fact is admitted to have such evidence that even philosophers ought to receive it as certain, but not if it is ascribed to a new religion. On this subject no evidence is sufficient. It is perfectly unexceptionable in philosophy; but in religion a sensible man will reject it, whatever it may be, even without further examination. The circumstance of its being a miracle connected with religion is sufficient, in his opinion, to prove it a cheat, however complete the testimony. The world, it seems, has been so imposed on by ridiculous stories of this kind that we must not even listen to any testimony in favor of religious miracles. This author would indeed reduce the advocates of religion to an awkward dilemma. They are called upon to produce evidence for their religion, but if they adduce it sensible men will not notice it; even if it is good every-where else, it must go for nothing in religion. Upon these principles we might indeed give up the contest: but we are not willing to admit that this is sound logic or good sense. The reason assigned for proscribing, in this summary way, all the testimony in favor of religion will apply to other subjects. Men have been imposed on by ridiculous stories in philosophy as well as in religion; but when evidence is proposed shall we not even examine it, because there have been impositions? This is the very reason why we should examine with care, that we may distinguish between the true and the false.

“ If it were true that miracles had often been ascribed to new religions it would not prove that there never were any true miracles, but rather the contrary; just as the abounding of counterfeit money is evidence that there is some genuine; for that

which has no existence is not counterfeited. But the clamor that has been raised by infidels about new religions being commonly founded on miracles, or the pretense of miracles, has very little foundation in fact. Besides the Jewish and Christian religions (which are indeed parts of the same), it would, I believe, be difficult to designate any other which claims such an origin.

“After all that has been said of the false maxims of the Jesuits, I doubt whether any one could be selected so perfectly at war with reason as this of the philosopher; nay, I think I may challenge all the enemies of revelation to cull from any Christian writer a sentence so surcharged with prejudice.

“But, to do justice to Mr. Hume, though he seems to have closed the door against all discussion on our part, yet, in one of his general maxims, he leaves us one alternative. The maxim is this: ‘That no testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle unless it be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more miraculous than the fact.’ An ingenious writer * has undertaken to meet Mr. Hume on his own ground, and has endeavored to prove that the testimony of the apostles and early Christians, if the facts reported by them were not true, is a greater miracle than any which they have recorded. But the maxim, as stated by Mr. Hume, is not correct. With the change of a single word perhaps it may be adopted, and will place the question on its proper ground. The change which I propose is to substitute the word *improbable* for *miraculous*. And it will then read: *No testimony is sufficient to establish a miracle, unless the testimony be of such a kind that its falsehood would be more improbable than the fact which it endeavors to establish.* The ground of objection to the word *miraculous* is, that it involves a false principle, which is that facts are incredible in proportion as they are miraculous; which principle he in sev-

* Dr. Gleig.

eral places avows, and which is indeed a cardinal point in his system of evidence. But it is not true. There are many cases which might be proposed, in which, of two events, one of which must be true, that which is miraculous is more probable than the one which is merely natural. I will mention only one at present. Man was either immediately created by God, or he proceeded from some natural cause. Need I ask which of these is more probable? and yet the first is miraculous; the second is not. The plain truth is, that in all cases the fact which has most evidence is most probable, whether it be miraculous or natural. And when all evidence relating to a proposition is before the mind, THAT IS TRUE WHICH IS EASIEST TO BE BELIEVED, because it is easier to believe with evidence than against it. We are willing, therefore, that this maxim, as now stated, should be the ground of our decision, and we pledge ourselves to prove that the falsehood of the miracles of the Gospel would be more improbable, and consequently more incredible, than the truth of the facts recorded in them. But this discussion will be reserved for another place.

“To conclude: Since it has been shown that there is no antecedent presumption against miracles from the nature of God, or from the laws by which he governs the universe; since a miraculous fact is not more difficult to be accomplished by omnipotence than any other; since miracles are no further improbable than as they are unusual; since they are the most suitable and decisive evidences which can be given of a revelation; since even by the concession of Mr. Hume himself there may be sufficient testimony fully to establish them; and since the many false pretenses to miracles, and the general disposition to credit them, are rather proofs that they have existed than the contrary, we may safely conclude that Mr. Hume’s argument on this subject is sophistical and delusive, and that so far from being incredible, whatever may be their evidence, when brought

to support religion, that is, of all others, the very case in which they are most reasonable and credible.

“In a recent popular but anonymous publication, entitled, ‘Essays on the Pursuit of Truth, on the Progress of Knowledge, and the Fundamental Principles of all Evidence and Expectation, by the Author of Essays on the Formation and Publication of Opinions,’ the doctrine of Hume on the subject of testimony has been exhibited in a form somewhat new and imposing. And as this writer has acquired considerable celebrity in England, and his ‘Essays’ have been published in Philadelphia and recommended strongly to the public upon the authority of the ‘Westminster Review,’ it seems necessary to guard the public against the insidious design of the writer. The ingenious author, indeed, never brings the subject of divine revelation directly into view, in all that he has written; and I believe the word ‘miracles’ does not occur in either of the volumes which he has published. It is a fact, however, that in the last of his essays he has revived, in substance, the famous argument of Hume on miracles; and has, with even more concealed sophistry than the celebrated infidel employed, endeavored to prove that no testimony, however strong, is sufficient to establish any fact which involves a deviation from the regular course of the laws of nature. That I may not be suspected of misrepresenting the sentiments of this discriminating and popular writer, I will here insert an extract from the essay before mentioned, which contains the substance of the whole argument:

“‘Testimony must be either oral or written. As far as the mere physical circumstances are concerned, we evidently commence our use of it by reasoning from effects to causes. We infer, for example, that the writing before us has been the work of some human being, in doing which we of course assume the uniformity of causation. If from the circumstances attending

the testimony we infer that it is entitled to be received as veracious; if, for instance, we find that it has proceeded from a man of tried integrity, and who acted under the influence of motives which render it unlikely that he should deceive, our inference still proceeds on the assumption of the same principle. I may have, in other cases, found these circumstances to have been the precursors or causes of true testimony; but how can I or any one tell that they have operated in the same way in the instance before me? The reply must evidently be, that it is impossible to avoid assuming that the same causes have invariably the same effects.

“ ‘In fact, if we examine the rules which have been laid down for the reception of the testimony, or any of those marks which have been pointed out as enabling us to judge of its credibility, we shall find them all involving the uniformity of causation. It is allowed on all hands that the concurrence of a number of witnesses in the same assertion, their reputation for veracity, the fact of the testimony being against their own interest, the probability of detection in any false statements, are all circumstances enhancing the credibility of what they affirm. These are considered as general principles on the subject gathered from experience, and we apply them instinctively to any new case which may be presented to us, either in the course of our own observation or as having taken place at some former period. But it is obvious, from what has just been said, that unless we assume a uniformity in the succession of causes and effects we cannot transfer our experience from any one case to another. That certain circumstances have produced true testimony in one or a hundred instances can be no reason why they should produce it in a different instance, unless we assume that the same causes have necessarily the same effects.

“ ‘It is clearly shown by this reasoning that in the reception of testimony and the use of physical evidence we proceed on

the same principle. But in the case of testimony there is a peculiarity not belonging to physical evidence. In the former we not only have certain effects from which it is our task to infer the causes, or certain causes from which to infer the effects; as when we judge the writing before us to have been the work of some human being, or the testimony to be true on account of the circumstances under which it was given: but the testimony itself consists of the assertion of facts, and the nature of the facts asserted often forms part of the grounds on which the veracity of the testimony is determined. It frequently happens that while external circumstances tend to confirm the testimony, the nature and circumstances of the facts attested render it highly improbable that any such facts should have taken place, and these two sets of circumstances may be so exactly equivalent as to leave the mind in irremediable doubt. In the consideration of both, however, the same assumption is involved. We think the facts improbable because we have found them rarely occurring under the circumstances stated; we think the testimony likely to be true because we have generally found true testimony to proceed from witnesses acting under the influence of similar motives, and what we have found to happen in other cases we are irresistibly led to conclude must also happen in the case before us.

“The opposition of the circumstances of the evidence and the nature of the facts may be carried still further. Assertions are frequently made which in themselves imply a breach of uniformity of causation. From such cases the conclusions already established remove all difficulty. To weigh probabilities, to determine what credit is due to two sets of conflicting circumstances neither of which, as far as our knowledge extends, is irreconcilable to the usual course of nature, is often a nice and arduous task; but if the principles of this essay are correct, it is easy to see what reception ought to be given to

assertions professedly implying a deviation from the uniform succession of causes and effects.

“ ‘ Suppose, for instance, any person to affirm that he had exposed a cubic inch of ice to a temperature of two hundred degrees of Fahrenheit, and that at the expiration of an hour it had retained its solidity. Here is a sequence of events asserted which is entirely at variance with the admitted course of nature ; and the slightest reflection is sufficient to show that to believe the assertion would involve a logical absurdity. The intrinsic discrepancy of the facts could never be overcome by any possible proofs of the truth of the testimony.

“ ‘ For let us put the strongest case imaginable ; let us suppose that the circumstance of the ice remaining unmelted rests on the concurrent testimony of a great number of people—people too of reputation, science, and perspicacity—who had no motive for falsehood, who had discernment to perceive and honesty to tell the real truth, and whose interests would essentially suffer from any departure from veracity. Under such circumstances false testimony, it may be alleged, is impossible.

“ ‘ Now mark the principle on which this representation proceeds. Let us concede the positions that what is attested by a great number of witnesses must inevitably be true ; that people of reputation and intelligence without any apparent motive for falsehood are invariably accurate in their testimony ; and that they are, above all, incapable of violating truth when a want of veracity would be ruinous to their interests. Granting all this, I ask the objector how he knows that these things are so—that men of this character and in these circumstances speak truth ? He will reply that he has invariably found them to act in this manner ; but why, because you found them to act in this manner in a few or even in many cases within your own experience, or in the experience of ages, do you conclude that they have acted so in all cases and in the case before us ? The only answer is,

that it is impossible not to take for granted that in precisely similar circumstances similar results will ensue, or that like causes have always like effects.

“Thus, on the ground of uniformity of causation, he would be maintaining the competency of testimony to prove a fact which implies a deviation from that uniformity.’

“It will abbreviate the answer to this specious argument to acknowledge that the general principle which this author takes so much pains to establish, and on which he builds his reasoning, is freely admitted to be not only correct, but self-evident. That the same causes uniformly produce the same effects is a truth so obvious, and so generally admitted, that it was unnecessary for the ingenious author of this essay to spend so much time in rendering it evident. And I am willing to admit its certainty to be as undoubted in moral as in physical subjects. But while I freely admit that the same causes will uniformly be followed by the same effects, I do by no means accede to the proposition which our author seems to consider as of the same import, namely, that the course of nature, or the laws of nature, never have been interrupted or suspended; and the whole appearance of force and plausibility which the argument of this writer possesses arises from the artful confounding of these distinct propositions. I agree that no testimony can be strong enough to induce a rational man to believe that the same causes will not be attended with the same effects; for this would be to assent to an evident absurdity. But it is an entirely different thing to believe that the laws of nature have sometimes been suspended; for in this case we suppose that an extraordinary cause has intervened. To believe that a divine power has interposed to change the course of nature is surely not the same thing as to believe that the same cause which commonly produced one effect is now attended by another entirely different. The natural causes, it is true, remain the

same, but the general proposition stated above is not true if confined only to these. If there exist supernatural causes, or a power superior to the laws of nature—and this our author does not profess to deny—then the laws of nature, or mere natural causes, may remain the same, and yet, by the operation of these supernatural causes, effects entirely diverse from those that would be the sequence of natural causes may take place. And the author himself seems in one place to have been aware of this distinction, and to admonish the reader of its existence; and yet through the whole of the argument he proceeds as if the two propositions were identical. He ought, however, to have recollected that while no man in his senses disbelieves the first proposition, much the greater number of men have believed that in some cases the laws of nature have been suspended; not that they thought that the same causes did not, in these instances, produce the same effects, but that other causes of greater potency than natural causes were put into operation.

“When our author, therefore, infers from the uniformity of causation that no testimony is sufficient to be the foundation of a rational belief that there has been a deviation from the common course of nature, he applies a correct principle to a case to which it evidently does not belong. Because the same cause must produce the same effects, does it follow that when another and superior cause operates the same effects must be produced? This would be in direct repugnance to his own maxim. Then, before this principle of the uniformity of causes and effects can be applied, it must be demonstrated that in the case under consideration no other causes operate but such as are usual and natural, and whenever he shall be able to establish this there will be no further contest respecting the matter.

“That I do not misrepresent the argument of the author will appear satisfactorily by considering the cases which he had ad-

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duced. 'Suppose, for instance,' says he, 'any person to affirm that he had exposed a cubic inch of ice to a temperature of two hundred degrees of Fahrenheit, and that at the expiration of an hour it had retained its solidity. Here is a sequence of events asserted which is entirely at variance with the admitted course of nature; and the slightest reflection is sufficient to show that to believe the assertion would involve a logical absurdity. The intrinsic discrepancy of the facts could never be overcome by any possible proofs of the truth of testimony.'

"In another page he says, 'If a number of men were to swear that they had seen the mercury of the barometer remain at the height of thirty inches when placed in the exhausted receiver of an air-pump, their testimony would be instantly rejected. The universal conclusion would be that such an event was impossible.' What is here confidently asserted would only be true upon the supposition that no causes but such as were natural operated in the cases adduced; but on the hypothesis of the operation of a supernatural cause there would neither be absurdity nor impossibility in either of the facts. What! could not He who established those laws and gave to heat and air, respectively, their peculiar power and qualities, suspend their usual operation? Could not he cause the ice to remain unmelted in any temperature, and the mercury to remain suspended without the pressure of the atmosphere? But the sophistical nature of the argument used is most evident. The principle is, that similar causes must have similar effects. Very good—what then? Why, if ice remain unmelted at two hundred degrees of Fahrenheit, then this principle would be violated! I answer, not at all, provided another cause is in operation of such potency as to counteract the usual effects of caloric, or to counteract the gravity of the quicksilver *in vacuo*. And it will not do to allege that God, who established these laws,

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will not contravene them on any occasion ; for this would be an entire change of the ground of the argument, and a relinquishment of the principle on which the reasoning of our author is founded. Besides, it would be a mere begging of the question in dispute.

“Now, in both the cases adduced by this writer to illustrate and confirm his argument, on which he pronounces so confidently that the judgment of men would universally reject any testimony, I beg leave to be of a different opinion, and will appeal to the common sense of all reflecting men whether, on the supposition that a dozen men of perspicacity and undoubted integrity should solemnly affirm that they had seen a cubic inch of ice remain an hour unmelted at two hundred degrees of Fahrenheit, whether they could refuse their assent, even if they knew of no good reason why the laws of nature should be suspended? But if they knew that an important purpose in the divine government could be answered by such a miracle, much less testimony would be sufficient to produce unwavering conviction of the truth of the extraordinary fact. And while they assent to such facts on sufficient testimony they are guilty of no absurdity, and violate no rule of common sense. It is true that the credibility of the event reported may be reduced to this question—whether it is more probable that the laws of nature should, for a good end, be suspended, or that twelve men of tried veracity should agree to assert a falsehood without any motive to induce them to do so. And here our ingenious author revives the metaphysical balance of Mr. Hume ; and after admitting that the evidence from testimony may be so strong that nothing is wanting to give it force, yet the maxim that the same causes may have the same effects is also a truth so certain that no evidence can countervail it. We have, therefore, according to this statement, the equipoise of evidence which we have already

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considered in Mr. Hume's argument. The rational mind, in such circumstances, must remain neutral; it can neither believe nor disbelieve; for the evidence for the one exactly counterbalances that for the other. But after stating this hypothesis our author finds that the evidence from testimony never can be so convincing as that which we have for the uniformity of causation. His words are: 'If the rejection and the admission of the testimony equally implied a deviation from the uniform terms of causes and effects, there could be no reason for rejecting or admitting it.' 'But the rejection of the testimony is not in this predicament. The causes of testimony—or, in other words, those considerations which operate on the minds of the witness—cannot always be ascertained; and as we are uncertain as to the causes in operation, we cannot be certain of the effect; we cannot be sure that the circumstances of the witness are such as have given rise to true testimony, and consequently we cannot be sure that the testimony is true.'

"On this whole subject I have several remarks to make. First, this method of destroying the equipoise of evidence, granted by Mr. Hume and conceded by our author, is not altogether fair; because it does not admit, what is obviously true, that in regard to some kinds of testimony the evidence is so certain that we might as soon doubt our own existence as the truth of the facts attested. Now, this being the case, there was no propriety in representing all testimony as being involved in some degree of uncertainty.

"Again, what is here said of testimony will apply just as fully to what we ourselves witness, and for the truth of which we have the testimony of our own senses. I mean, that if the argument of our author is at all valid it will prove that if we saw the ice remain unmelted in the heat, and beheld it ever so often, and found that thousands around us received the same

impression, we must not credit our own senses, nor believe what we saw with our own eyes, because, however certain this kind of evidence may be, it cannot be more certain than the principle that the same causes will uniformly produce the same effects. Therefore, although we should, under all manner of circumstances, see such events, they could not be believed; for to believe them would be a logical absurdity. And thus would these men, by their metaphysics, reason us out of the evidence of our very eye-sight. I know, indeed, that neither Hume nor the author whose reasoning we are now considering has pushed the argument to this its just consequence; but I would defy any man to show that it is not as applicable to the evidence of the senses as to that derived from testimony. Now, as the kind of evidence which will invariably command assent is not learned by metaphysical reasoning, but by experience, I would leave the matter to be decided by every man of impartial judgment for himself. Every man knows whether or not he would believe his own eyes if he should see ice remain unmelted in two hundred degrees of temperature according to Fahrenheit; or whether he would say, 'It seems to be so, but it cannot be true, because it contradicts a self-evident principle, that the same causes must always be followed by the same effects.' To which a man of plain, unsophisticated common sense would reply, 'I must believe my own senses; if doing so contradicts a thousand abstract principles, I care not — "seeing is believing."'" And the same may be said in regard to testimony. Suppose a thousand persons, entirely disinterested, to aver that they had seen ice remain unmelted in a very high temperature, we could not but believe them, account for the fact as we might. But we have already proved that believing in such an event violates no maxim, but only supposes that some extraordinary power or cause is in operation; and when it is understood that this deviation from the laws of nature is intended to confirm

the declarations of some person who claims to be a messenger of God, there is not only no absurdity in the thing, but all presumption against the probability of such supernatural interposition is removed, as has been shown in the argument on that subject.

“It might also be demonstrated that upon the principles of this author it would be absurd, upon any evidence, to believe not only in a fact which involved a real deviation from the laws of nature, but in any one which was entirely different from all our own experience of the laws of nature. For if it would be absurd to believe, on the testimony of thousands of unconnected witnesses, that ice did not melt in a certain case when placed in the fire, then it was altogether rational for the king of Siam, and all others in similar circumstances, to disbelieve the fact that water had been known to become as hard as a stone, so that men and animals could walk upon it. Persons so situated never could know that such an effect existed but by testimony; yet as this testimony contradicted all their own experience about the laws of nature in relation to water, they ought rather to reject the testimony, however strong, than to credit a fact which seemed to involve a deviation from ‘the sequence of cause and effect,’ to use the language of this author. And thus we should be reduced to the necessity of rejecting all facts not consonant to our own personal experience; for to receive them on the ground of testimony would be to violate the principle that causation is uniform.

“But the zeal of our author to establish his favorite point has led him not only to assert that a deviation from the regular succession of the laws of nature was incredible on the ground of testimony, but that it is, in the nature of things, impossible. In this assertion he certainly may lay claim to originality; for I believe no one before him, not even Hume, has gone so far in bold affirmation. His words are: ‘An event is impossible

which contradicts our experience, or which implies that the same causes have produced different effects, or the same effects been preceded by different causes. Thus, when we pronounce that it was impossible for a piece of ice to remain in the midst of burning coals without being dissolved, our conclusion involves a complete knowledge of this particular effect of fire on ice.'

"And he is so confident that this is the true import of the word *impossible* that he says, 'If I am not greatly deceived, the acutest reasoner, the closest thinker, the most subtle analyzer of words, will find himself unable to produce any other meaning of the term impossible than that which is here assigned to it.' But he seems to have felt that he had gone too far in this dogmatical, and I must say irrational, assertion; for in a note he himself gives another and one of the true meanings of the word impossible. But as confident assertion, accompanied by no proof nor reason, is sufficiently answered by a confident denial, I would take the liberty of saying, therefore, that, if I am not greatly mistaken, no accurate philologist will admit that this is the true meaning of the word impossible. And certainly, men of plain common sense never can be persuaded that it is impossible for the succession of events according to the laws of nature to be changed. It is true, when we confine our ideas to the mere powers and qualities of nature, we do assert that their effects will be uniform, and that it is impossible that the same causes should produce different effects; but when we extend our views to the Great First Cause, it is not only absurd but impious to assert that he cannot suspend or alter the laws of nature. Nothing is impossible to him which does not imply a contradiction, or is not repugnant to his attributes.

"The conclusion which is rational on this subject is, that all things are possible to God, and whatever is possible may be

believed on sufficient testimony; which testimony, however, must be strong, in proportion to the improbability of the event to be confirmed.”*

Clearly the point made by the ingenious objector is not well taken. Plausible at the first view, it fails utterly on examination. The event could be established by testimony. Miracles a question of fact. We now, then, reach the direct examination of the crucial point: is the revelation supported by miracle? This is a question of fact. It must be decided, not on abstract reasoning, but by the testimony in the case. This is reason's last resort in a case of the kind, and on it the decision must turn, and on it the fate of the Christian system must depend. If the alleged miracles were veritable occurrences, and if they can be so made to appear, the system must stand against all possible assault: “the gates of hell cannot prevail against it”—its permanence and inevitable final triumph are guaranteed: no craft or invention can withstand it. If the alleged miracles can be shown to be false, specious, fabulous inventions merely, the system itself must crumble as the baseless fabric of a vision, and, like an “insubstantial pageant faded, leave not a rack behind.” Nothing is more certain than this. The idea that Christianity can survive the abandonment of its supernaturalism is a vain dream. There may remain truths in it more clearly enunciated than elsewhere, and important truths, but all virtue will have gone out of the system—its right to live will have ceased. For either the miracles did occur or they did not. If they did not, the allegation that they did is a lie; the system which stands on a lie is itself a lie. If the works themselves occurred, but were simply effects within natural law—ingenious impositions on ignorance by the knowledge of some occult and generally unknown latent agents, yet assuming to

* See Alexander's “Evidences of Christianity.”

be supernatural; or direct manifestations of God in attestation of the truth delivered, the lie remains—the whole is reduced to an artful trick. This is the final issue in the debate.

It is therefore the question, Ought Christianity to be abandoned or retained? When we consider its relations to mind, its influence, its identification with civilization, its incorporation into all thoughts and feelings of the best part of the race, into the very structure of society, its usages, laws, institutions, its relations to progress; when we reflect on the new state of things which must ensue on its rejection, the question of who shall lead us under the new *régime*, when the Bible has been eradicated and Christ has been dethroned and the Church abolished; when we begin to survey the ruin, and reckon up what we have left; when we cast about to find our new guides, and ask whither they will conduct us, we cannot fail to discover that it is a serious issue.

In support of the validity of the miracles we submit the untenable consequences of the opposite supposition. These will be found to be many and grave, and, whatever they are, the rejecter must accept them as his belief.

Suppose we reject them, we must answer to the question, Why? We must also in the answer explain some difficult facts.

Why abandon Christianity? To the question, Why?—there can be but one of two answers: it must be either because we have positive proof against them, or because of insufficient proof in their favor. Suppose we raise the question, What is the proof against them? what can we answer? We have seen that no abstract proof of their impossibility or improbability exists. Has a single witness left his testimony against them as a fact? Does the literature of the times furnish any account of dissent on personal knowledge? It is believed there is not a single example. There is then no abstract or positive proof bearing against them. What, then, suggests the negative? Rejecters

have had centuries and all possible facilities for the discovery of disproof, and they have not lacked in zeal or ability, but no one, it is believed, can name a single disproof they have been able to find; not a dissenting witness on personal knowledge, not an inconsistent or contradictory fact—absolutely nothing, not only to disprove, but not even to discredit, favoring witnesses.

The entire attempt at disproof is reduced to two arguments, which are supposed to weaken the force of the favoring proof, but not to disprove. These are, first, men were formerly full of superstitions which made them the easy prey of imposture; second, in their ignorance any unusual thing was supposed to be miraculous. Lecky has exhausted the learning on this subject. No one has ever disputed either point. They are not fresh. Revelation itself alludes to them in the way of warning. They are among the most conspicuous surface-facts of history; but what is their exact value in this controversy? Do they furnish any disproof of the miracles of Scripture? Do they in the slightest degree weaken their force? Certainly not, any more than counterfeit coin depreciates the value of the true metal. They put us on our guard, and create a demand for the use of tests; nothing more. To infer that all so-called miracles are spurious because many are found to be so is a *non sequitur* and an abuse of reason. To write down a list of gross and miserable superstitions and blaz-
The attempt at
disproof.
ing impostures, and then classify all supernaturalism as *ejusdem generis*, is a species of logical knavery not respectable among honorable thinkers. The actual and only questions, and which must be tested on their own merits, are, Were the works reported performed, or did the facts transpire, and were they supernatural? That men have been superstitious and many times deceived bears nothing on these questions. There is, then, no disproof of any kind, unless it shall be found in

the inadequacy of the proofs in support. Here is where the battle must be fought. It matters little which order shall be observed in the development of the argument; whether we consider first the question, Were the works alleged miraculous in the strict and proper sense? or, Were they actually performed? It is essential that both should be fully and fairly examined. We shall take them up in the order named.

Were the works miraculous, assuming that they occurred as recorded? The question now is, not whether they, or something out of which the story could be fabricated, occurred, but this: whether, if they occurred precisely as stated, and with the exact environments narrated, they were *de facto* supernatural. To this question any attempt to reason them away, or change them in the slightest degree, is irrelevant. At the proper time that point will be examined. The list of alleged cases is quite extensive, and spreads over thousands of years.

At the head stands the account of creation. That it was miraculous will not be disputed. Then follow the alleged descent of fire to consume Abel's sacrifice; the translation of Enoch, so that he did not see death; the communication made to Noah of a flood which was to overspread the inhabited parts of the earth, destroying its inhabitants; the actual occurrence of the flood; the confusion of tongues of the Babel builders; the appearance of an angel of God to Abraham several different times, bearing messages to him touching the purposes of God concerning himself and his seed; the birth of Isaac; the voice of God which called to him out of heaven when he was about to offer Isaac in sacrifice; the appearance of an angel to Isaac, and the renewal to him of the covenant made with Abraham; the appearance of angels to Lot; the overthrow of the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah; the wrestling of an angel with Jacob at Pennel; the illumination given to Jacob when dying, which enabled him to give an exact and detailed account of the future

history of his seed for generations and ages; the illumination of Joseph, so that he was enabled to interpret the dreams of Pharaoh; the miracle of the burning bush in which God appeared to Moses; the rod; withered hand; the miracle of the ten plagues wrought by Moses; the parting of the Red Sea for the dry passage of the hosts of Israel at the waving of Moses's rod; the cloud by day and pillar of fire by night that guided and guarded the camps of Israel for forty years; the cloudy pillar enters the tabernacle; the manna that fell about their camps six days out of seven for the same length of time; the flowing of the river from the smitten rock; destruction of Korah; water from the rock in Kadesh; healing by brazen serpent; the healing of the waters of Marah; the giving of the law on Mount Sinai; the fall of the walls of Jericho; sun stayed; thunder and rain commanded by Samuel; Jeroboam's hand withered; the parting of the river Jordan for the passage of the tribes; the angel of the Lord appearing to Joshua; also to Balaam; the dumb ass speaking; the call of Samuel; multiplication of the cruse of oil and barrel of meal; child restored to life; sacrifice consumed by fire; Naaman healed; Gehazi struck with leprosy; iron made to swim; Syrians blinded; man restored to life; Hezekiah healed; shadows on the dials. These miracles here cited are a selection from those mentioned in the Old Testament. Many more might be added, showing that miracle has attended revelation from the first. We now add a selection from the New Testament: blind restored to sight, numerous cases; centurion's servant healed; deaf and dumb restored; quieting of the Lake of Gennesaret; dropsy cured; various diseases healed; fig-tree cursed; five thousand fed; four thousand fed; withered hand; issue of blood; Jairus's daughter restored; Lazarus raised; lepers cleansed. The selection is of a few of the many recorded miracles wrought by our Lord. Of the several classes there were numerous examples:

read the evangelists and see how the years were crowded with similar cases. The references need not be multiplied. The book contains almost nothing else.

It is confidently asserted that in all this vast collection there is not a single case which, if it occurred with its environments, is not a real miracle—not one that is not declared to be of immediate divine power. Their great number shows how pervasively supernatural the revelation claims to be, over and above its absolute inspirational character. Strip it of these, and we have for residuum a lifeless skeleton; retain them in their integrity, and we have a collocation of the most important and wonderful facts and teachings that have transpired in human history—a sacred temple full of the fragrance of divine presence and the light of divine wisdom. It is in their favor that they are uniformly respectable, always in the interests of righteousness, and, except where punishments for great and dangerous offenses, in all cases beneficent.

Did they occur? The question is one of fact. It cannot be settled on abstract principles. No proof from that source can be of the slightest avail. It must be established on Did the miracles occur? human testimony, if at all, or by personal knowledge. Those only can be of avail as witnesses who have personal knowledge of the facts. Ultimately the case is resolved into one of personal knowledge. To divest it of all possibility of fraud the case must be one which a competent observer had a perfectly fair opportunity to know; must be the case of an act which is plain and simple, a case manifestly miraculous, a case in which deception is impossible. The observer must be honest, disinterested, capable. These conditions conspiring must be sufficient to enable him to know whether the miracle took place or not.

But in this case the miracle is known only to the observer. Those who were not present cannot share in the knowledge.

Can the benefit of the miraculous act be made to accrue to those who did not personally witness it? There is obviously but one way in which it can; namely, by means of the testimony of those who were personal witnesses.

It is objected, allowing that a miracle might be wrought under such circumstances, that the testimony in the case would be convincing—but that the miracles of the Bible are not of this kind. The first reason alleged is, that they are so far removed from us in time and place as to make it impossible to verify them. The assumption is that, had the events occurred within a short period and near at hand, the testimony would acquire additional value. At first view there seems to be reason in it, but upon examination it is found to be a sheer fallacy. Testimony is as good for thousands of years as it is for thousands of minutes. Time effects no change in it. The same is true of space. It is no better on the spot than it is thousands of leagues away. The simple question is, is it the testimony of actual witnesses? Testimony adequate in one time and place will be adequate in every time and place.

Objection from
lapse of time.

Lapse of time may endanger the integrity of the testimony, so also may distance, but in this way only can they affect its value. If there should be reason to suppose that it has suffered in this respect, its value would be impaired. This point, therefore, needs to be examined.

If the testimony were first delivered after the lapse of a long period, that circumstance would render it probable that it was not accurate, because of the uncertainties of memory. If it was first delivered at a remote place the opportunity for its proper examination would not exist; that would affect its value. If it were oral testimony it would be incapable of pure transmission, as no oral statement can be repeated without probable change. But in all these cases the value of the testimony is impaired.

simply because its integrity is questionable ; not because of lapse of time or remoteness of the event. Suppose the testimony to have been delivered with all the proper conditions to make it credible at first, and then and there to have been put on record, and the unchanged record to be handed down the generations, it remains as good to the end of time as it was the minute it was uttered. It is simply a question, Was it good then and does it come to us with unimpaired integrity ? If this can be shown, the thousandth generation stands as near to the witness as those who received his statement direct. All that the one gets the other gets, and there is no difference between them ; the same witness says the same word forever. Had we been there, what would have been necessary to render the testimony credible at first ? The wisdom of the ages has created the following *criteria*:

Criteria of evidence. (a) The fact must be one plain and simple. (b) It must transpire in open day and be without concealment. (c) The witness must be in such relations to it as to prevent deception. (d) It must be a work which could not be performed either by sleight of hand or any natural agent. (e) The witness must have the requisite capacity to judge of its genuineness. (f) The occasion must be one to justify the miracle. (g) There must be several witnesses. (h) They must concur after rigorous examination. (i) They must be disinterested. (j) The testimony must be public and at the time and place. (k) There must be no contradictory testimony. If then the witnesses sustain a good character and suffer great losses, even of life itself, for their testimony, such testimony will establish any fact.

Have we the testimony of the actual witnesses ? Has it descended to us in unbroken succession ? This confessedly is the most important and the most difficult question in the debate. It comes to us in the sacred books chiefly. There are two methods of argument. The first is that which arises from the existence of the books. It comprises these points : The books are now

in existence and we have free access to them, and they are accepted by Jews and Christians, whose records they contain, as genuine, and have been so from time immemorial. Testimony of the actual witnesses. It is impossible that they should have gained this position were they spurious, unless it can be shown how a fraud could have been invented, and palmed off on a nation with respect to its own history, so successfully as to be universally accepted and never called in question. Leslie has presented the argument in its best form in his "Short and Easy Method with the Deists." It has never been successfully controverted. It is believed that it would be impossible to imitate and finally establish a fraud of the kind. The existence of the Jewish nation and the Christian Church is a fact which must be accounted for. These books tell the story, and it can be shown that the records in most cases date back to the time whose events they record. Had there been no such events the record must have been challenged, but no such challenge anywhere exists. It is evident that it We have the evidence in its integrity. comes to us uncorrupted. The evidence is of two kinds. The records have been the property of contending sects and active enemies from the first, who have watched each other with untiring vigilance, and who have thus guarded every line and letter. Not a text could have been changed without being observed. The same reasons precisely which would prevent the successful initiation of fictitious history of one nation or any Church now, and here, were always operative in every time and place. If it would be impossible now to set afloat, and cause generally to be credited, some utterly groundless story of a sect or nation, either creditable or discreditable, and no protest or denial be made, it would have been so at any time. If now no new chapter could be introduced into the Bible reciting some new miracle, or doctrine, or name, without notice, so it would have been impossible at any

former time. The same reasons which guard it now have guarded it in a sufficient degree always.

But still more certain is the proof found in the fact that we have continuous mention made of the books, and substantially of their contents, in the literature of all kinds, in unbroken continuity back to the date of their origin. As we ascend from century to century we find innumerable references and quotations showing the text to be intact and unchanged. The writings extant at the dawn of Christianity, and anterior to the existence of the New Testament books, make mention of the sacred books of the Jews; indeed they were translated into the Greek by an imperial edict at least two hundred and seventy years before Christ, and became the property of the classic world. The generally accepted account of the translation by the seventy-two is sometimes called in question in some respects, but no doubt is expressed as to the fact of the Greek translation of the substance of the Old Testament for centuries before the advent. The New Testament was written immediately, that is, within the life-time of the generation following the ascension of Christ. Then come the writings of the fathers and classic heathen authors who referred to these New Testament books. Controversies and commentaries put them under immediate demand. The contests of sects and disagreeing teachers made them of great authority and use, and from that time to this they are quoted as authority by almost all writers. It is believed that the entire Scriptures could be restored, if lost, from these sources at any time from the apostolic age. Were all the books that have been written for the last eighteen centuries collected it would be found that nine tenths of them in some way refer to the sacred books, and it would be found the references begin about the time the book purports to have been written. How could this be if the books did not exist? And if they existed then and

there, when all the means for exposing a fraud were at hand and the disposition to do so existed in full force, how could they be accepted, or even permitted to circulate and make dangerous and disturbing utterance, without loud and earnest protest and absolute denial of the alleged facts?

The battle has been long and hard on the field of the historic integrity and authenticity of the sacred books, and it is believed can never be repeated; and it is safe to say the vic- No writing so scrutinized. tory has been fairly won in favor of the sacred volume. No writing has ever been subjected to such scrutiny. It would be impossible to intensify the venom or increase the vigilance and ingenuity with which it has been conducted on the side of doubt, and honest faith has not been less laborious. Every possible source of light has been laid under tribute, and confidence in the truth of the record and its faithful transmission was never stronger than at this moment. The attempt to invalidate the genuineness and authenticity of the books has culminated, and can never be repeated. The work of defense led on by Lardner and concluded by the ripe scholarship of the present generation is triumphant.

We have the record. Are the contents true? Did the works take place? There is no counter-statement to contradict them—not one. Is it credible that this would have been so Are the records true? had they been false? It may be conceivable that it would be possible for a story of some wonder to go uncontradicted if it awakened no interest, if it had no influence, if it were understood to be a romance; but could it be published as a fact, and could it enter society as a disturber of customs, as a reconstructing force, and make disciples at great personal sacrifice, and attract general attention, and awaken hostility, and yet no attempt be made to expose it? and could any attempt to expose it be so legitimate as to set forth that no such fact

or facts existed? But in vain do we search for any thing of the kind; on the contrary, numerous admissions are found in the literature of the times. In the absence of all opposing testimony the case must be made up on a candid and searching examination of the testimony favoring. This is contained in the sacred books; in what purport to be consecutive annals, extending from the foundation of the Jewish race to the close of the apostolic age. The statement is in a straightforward, historical method. It is natural and simple, and with every appearance that it was believed to be truthful. Its veraciousness would never have been called in question but for the strangeness of some of the contained facts. Do these strange facts invalidate the record? They allege that to their knowledge, and in their presence, and in the presence of multitudes of those to whom they spoke and wrote, the works did take place. Many times they give in detail the time, the place, and the circumstance, and assert the public and general knowledge of the fact, and no one is found to dispute it. Either the statement is true or it is not. They believed it to be true or they did not. If they believed it and it was not true, they were deceived; if they did not believe it, they were deceivers. And if they were neither deceived nor deceivers the story was true. The examination of these points will evolve the whole subject.

Were they deceived? We cannot, of course, in this brief sketch attempt the detailed examination of each case. Suppose we take the miracles ascribed to Moses and those ascribed to Christ, and *ex uno disce omnes*. The theory is that the witnesses with respect to these miracles were honest, but deceived. They really believed that the things occurred, but in fact they did not. Is the thing supposed possible? Let it be remembered, to make out a case, how wide the deception must have been, and under what circumstances. Take the elder fraud first. Was Moses himself deceived, or was he a

Were the witnesses deceived?

deceiver? Select any of the alleged supernatural facts exhibited to or wrought through him. Take the burning bush. The scene is laid in Horeb, when he was keeping the flocks of Jethro, his father-in-law. It is recorded in the third chapter of Exodus, second verse, *et al.*: "And the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And when the Lord saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The address extends throughout the chapter. Did Moses believe this, and yet was it not real? Was there no such appearance and no such view? How was it possible for him so to believe and there be no foundation whatever in reality? Or, take the scene at Sinai, at the delivering of the law, as described in the nineteenth chapter. Did Moses believe that the things therein detailed occurred? that he received these two tables whereon the law was engraved from the hand of God? Or, take the case of the rod and the wonders it wrought in Egypt and for forty years in the wilderness—did he believe these things were so, and yet was there no truth in them? Were the people also deceived? Take the case of the parting of the Red Sea; the manna that fell around the camp six days and not the seventh for forty years; the pillar of fire that led them by night and of cloud that led them by day; the water that issued from the smitten rock, and all the rest of the wonders, which were simple matters of fact addressed to the sight. Were they all deceived, believing that these things were so, when in reality they were not? Would not this be a greater miracle than those recorded?

Nay, is it not an impossible supposition, without the intervention of some absolute supernatural power rather than preternatural influence to work the deception? The supposition does not escape miracle, but only disparages the agent working it. But, turning from Moses to Christ, let us follow up the inquiry. Was Christ deceived? He made extraordinary claims, lifting himself above Moses and the prophets, assuming even to be God, and in proof assumed to be able to do whatever God could do. He spent more than three whole years in doing wonders, healing the sick, giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, wholeness to the lame and maimed and paralytic, and life to the dead; multiplying a few cakes so as to feed five thousand, commanding the elements, walking on the surface of the water, and such like things. A large number of the cases are given in the daily record of his public life, with all the attendant circumstances, and it is added that these are a small part of his miraculous works. The list closes with an account of the resurrection of himself from the dead, and his ascension into heaven. Now the question is, Was he himself deceived? Did he believe in his own claim to be able to do these things, and that he actually did them, when in fact he had no such power and did nothing of the kind? And then what of the others, the on-lookers and recipients—enemies and friends alike of the great Performer? Were they deceived? Did the blind man believe he had been blind and had received his sight, and was he simply laboring under hallucination? Thousands were converted to the faith in a single day. Were they all deceived? Were they deceived in supposing that he was crucified and buried? They declare that he reappeared among them and remained more than forty days conversing with them, and then ascended in open day in their presence from the top of Olivet out of their sight. Were they deceived?

Nothing can be more certain than that the theory of delusion

cannot be true. No sane man who reads the marvelous recitals in the sacred books both of the Old and New Testaments can believe that they were honestly supposed to be real but in fact were impositions on unsuspecting credulity. There is no alternative; either the things did occur or the witnesses in the case are, without exception, impostors. Were they deceivers? Were Moses, Elijah, Christ, mere adroit tricksters? And were the Jewish nation and the disciples their dupes, or were the disciples also party to the fraud? In support of the theory that they were deceivers what single fact can be alleged? what known fact of their character? what flaw in the testimony? what intimation from contemporary writers? It is believed that not one atom of support can be gleaned from any of these sources. The sole and only ground for the assumption is, that the statements are intrinsically incredible to such a degree that no testimony can establish them. But what, then, shall we do with the facts which confront us?

The story was believed by thousands. Take the passage of the Red Sea and of the Jordan, the manna, the water from the rock, the scene at Sinai: the witnesses were hundreds of thousands—millions. How could they be deceived? Take the Christ miracles; read the history. How was it possible for the generation to be imposed upon? That they conquered doubt is undeniable. It is inexplicable on any other theory than that they were real. It is not pretended that men are not deceived often into the belief of unreal things. This is freely admitted, but it is confidently asserted that this is a case in which faith is proof positive of the reality.

But, again, consider the attributes of the testimony and answer how it is possible to believe it false. There are certain criteria which are conceived to be infallible tests of the truth of testimony, which the wisdom of ages has constructed for

the purpose of detecting falsehood. Let us apply these tests. We have already alluded to them ; we now come to apply them. For the purpose we might select any of the more conspicuous miracles. We will take that one which by all consent is chiefest—on which, indeed, it has always been agreed by friends and enemies the fate of the Christian religion is suspended—the resurrection of Christ. If it can be shown to be a fraud there is nothing left to defend ; if it can be defended no one can allege any reasonable ground of doubt with respect to any other miracle in the record, and attack becomes futile and vain.

First, the fact was simple, and one about which it was impossible there should be deception or delusion. The most conspicuous man of the nation, whose name and person were known by multitudes of people all over the land ; who had for the course of three years attracted public attention as no other man ever did ; the fame of whose miracles had reached every hamlet and stirred every household ; who was known to have bearded the civil and ecclesiastical authorities ; who was dreaded as a revolutionist ; who had given out that he would be certainly put to death, and that he would raise himself from the dead ; a man who claimed to be greater than any of the prophets, and shocked the governing classes by claiming equality with God himself ; a man who it was known, or at least evidently generally believed, had been the subject of many prophecies, and was that Messiah for whose coming their fathers for generations had waited and prayed ; at the very height of his career had been arrested, on one of the great feast days, and after an informal and unjust trial had been condemned to death, and in the presence of a vast multitude had been crucified to death. It was a public and criminal execution, the end of which was to put an end to a spreading and supposed dangerous heresy. Evidently utmost fear and wrath had been aroused to the

highest pitch because of some supposed and greatly dreaded national danger. The reigning sects had united, forgetful of their feuds, against a common enemy; the ecclesiastical and civil authorities had joined in the conspiracy; the execution had been made in the name of the Roman and Jewish law. The spot on which the gibbet was erected, and which was crimsoned with his blood, has been the most renowned spot on the globe. Contending nations guard it even now with jealous vigilance. That he was there slain has never been questioned. This we name as the first important fact.

The witnesses declare that on the third day he arose and reappeared among them, and remained with them for forty days. That it was not possible they should be deceived about it is incontrovertible. It must also appear that it was equally impossible for them successfully to deceive others. This is the second point we make. They assert that because of his declaration that he would rise again, and to make secure of their victim, the authorities took armed possession of his grave; the governor's seal was put upon it, and foreign soldiers were placed on guard. That this statement is true there can be no reason to doubt. Every thing points to its probability, and all the weight of testimony establishes it. It is asserted in all the gospels. They declare that, despite all these precautions, he did escape from the grave and from his armed keepers. They specify the precise time and manner of its occurrence. Could this have been a deception? Call to mind the state of public feeling; the absolute panic of the rulers; the fact that the disciples were few and weak and terrified; their Master, who alone by his presence had inspired them with hope, dead, and according to all that they had ever known of death gone from them forever; their enemies, rampant with rage and blood, in possession of the body; preternaturally intent on the extirpation of a scandalous heresy by removing its hated instigator;

all possibilities of power on one side, and only weakness and fear on the other. Is it conceivable that they could have attempted the deception alleged? If their madness had attempted it, how easy would have been the exposure and condign the punishment! Call to mind that immediately the report spread like the conflagration of a city—that the infection every-where manifested itself; that havoc and death were resorted to to stop it, but more and more it prevailed, this story fanning the flame. Now why was not the body produced? That would have stopped the mouths of these dangerous revolutionists—would have stayed the fanaticism, and the mad scheme of imposture would have died away. That they would have produced it had it been in their power may be deemed certain, and the failure under the circumstances is *prima facie* proof that somehow it had passed out of their possession.

This indeed they were swift to admit and explain. This is the story: While the Roman guardians of the grave slept the disciples stole the body and carried it away. The disciples, in their recorded testimony, add that this statement was invented by the authorities and published by the soldiers for pay, and on promise that they should be shielded from censure. It is of course too clumsy a device to require examination, as it was too imbecile to produce any effect at the time. That it was put forth is evident, as will appear in a moment; that it was thought the best and only account for the disappearance of the body is found in the fact that it was adopted; that it was a clumsy and incoherent invention, bearing on its face all the signs of haste, of fright, and of falsehood, is explained by the circumstances and exigencies of the occasion. No other account was ever attempted. When the gospels were published, forty years afterward, it was charged that this was still the report adhered to by the authorities up to that date, and the charge was made in the streets and cities where it circulated. The fright-

ened lambs had snatched the prey from the talons of the eagle and refused to restore it. Meantime the disciples boldly asserted the resurrection, and the people followed them. The one thing that would have closed the debate and stopped the dreadful carnage—for hundreds were slain, in the fever and frenzy of their hate—was the production of the body; but, that one thing wanting, armies were impotent to suppress the growing faith. There is no stronger proof of the resurrection of Jesus than the non-production of his body, the story of its denial, and the ineffectual attempts made to suppress the faith; for, had it not been true, the proof was easy, and it was the one thing which the authorities were interested to furnish but which they utterly failed to do. That they did not can be explained only because they could not—only because the resurrection actually had taken place.

If we turn now to the testimony in support of the fact we find that it is clear and invincible under the severest tests.

First. It is unequivocal. The witnesses assert that he had risen, that they had seen him, that he appeared among them, and conversed with them for the space of forty days; that they handled him, ate with him, journeyed with him, beheld the scars in his hands and side. The testimony is clear, positive, matter-of-fact. There is no chance for illusion or deception. Either what they deliver is true or they are false witnesses—false with intent.

The witnesses were numerous. The testimony has the following signs of truthfulness: One witness might suffice, but plurality is justly demanded in important cases for many reasons; these, specifically: two or more are less likely to be false than one; still more, less likely to be deceived. When two or more conspire to publish a lie the chances are increased to detect the fraud by leading them

Testimony unequivocal.

Witnesses numerous.

into contradictions. Men under the severest cross-examination may agree in a truth, but cannot avoid contradiction if the story be a lie. The direct witnesses in this case whose testimony descends to us are the four evangelists, St. Paul, St. Peter, and St. James. They also declare and quote the testimony of the multitudes who, like themselves, were eye-witnesses to the fact; of whom they allege there were more than five hundred at one time, many of whom were living and corroborating witnesses at the time.

Second. The witnesses harmonized. A rule of evidence is that testimony must accord to be of any value, but also it must differ. It must accord in substance, though it may differ in form and in minor and indifferent matters, but must never contradict. The rule is framed on established laws of mind. Agreement in the substance of what is delivered proves common knowledge; agreement in minute particulars of the form would prove collusion; contradiction is self-destructive. These witnesses agree perfectly in the substance, all testifying to the same important features. In matters of form they differ, as truthful minds must inevitably do, in relating the same event. They never contradict, under the severest ordeal of persecution. This the ages have agreed to consider the severest test of truth. No testimony can be shaken that agrees in these qualities.

Third. The evidence was delivered and made public at the time and place when the event occurred. This is important in every case. In this it is indispensable. It was not delayed until public attention had turned away; until the memories of the living generation had faded, until the feeling of interest had died out. These would have been fatal faults. It was not published in some remote place, and among a people who were unacquainted with the facts, or who by reason of distance could not give the subject a fair examination. This also would have

weakened the force of the testimony. It was delivered while the soldiers were reciting the story of their panic at the sudden appearance of the angel, while Calvary was yet smoking with blood, while the multitude were talking about the earthquake and darkened heavens; it was proclaimed about the city and at the door of the palace before the authorities had slept soundly over the murder; the new alarm followed close on the heels of the old, before the forces had disbanded or had felt any abatement of zeal against the dangerous disturber. There is no break in the drama.

Fourth. The event occurred at a period and point unfavorable to a successful fraud. It was not in a barbarous age, and among a crude and savage people. It burst upon the world in the zenith blaze of the Augustan age, the brightest period of ancient culture, and in one of the most renowned cities of the world, among a people of the most glorious lineage, and whose history for a thousand years had been flecked with the grandest names of all the ages, and as little liable as any people of any age to be the easy dupes of a stupid imposture.

Fifth. The witnesses were personally well qualified. They had good average capacity, they were not ambitious aspirants, who would be likely to concoct or abet a scheme of deception; they were not stupid ignoramuses, who would be the easy prey of a cunning knave; they were of the hardy yeomanry and honest working poor, and, as their subsequent history shows, of brave, generous blood; without art, and above pliancy; having good natural endowments and fair learning, but without such extraordinary gifts or training as to make them *over-shrewd*. They were utterly disinterested at the beginning and to the end so far as personal gain was concerned. The hero was nothing to them. The scheme profited them nothing. If false, it was a pure and simple lie, which could do nobody any good, themselves no more than others. It was a weak and foolish

lie which common sense must have seen would soon be exposed, to the disgrace and injury of all who abetted it. As an imposture, they had real interest in its exposure. To cling to it was their ruin, which they well understood. That they did not at once abandon it can never be explained on any principles of human nature commonly exhibited. To adhere to it demanded every kind of sacrifice to which human nature is reluctant.

Sixth. To the absence of interestedness they added unparalleled sacrifices in proof of their sincerity. While they were in no way to be profited by their adherence either for this or the next world, it cost them the greatest possible loss for both. The lie which they espoused, the most mischievous to themselves and others, required them to surrender every interest for its support. For the sake of the lie, they had to be the most self-denying and exemplary men that ever lived. Is there any thing dear in property? They had to give up all their earthly possessions—houses, lands, and comforts of home. Is there any thing dear in friendship, and closer fellowships of the home and family? They had to forsake father and mother and wife and children and become outcasts on the face of the earth. Is there any thing dear in life itself? The Master himself had to die, and one and all of the immediate witnesses had to die, and thousands of the converts had to die, on rack and wheel, on gibbet and cross. They were roasted, boiled, sawn asunder, flayed alive; men and women and children offered up their all of love and life without a murmur. Can it be that they did this for a known fraud?

Men may die for an idea, for a principle, for a friend—may surrender all of position and earthly hope if needs be—but who ever heard of a man, a multitude of men, making such sacrifice for a known fraud, wholly void of any possible profit to them, not one in the list recanting or confessing

the deception? The thing is possible on the theory that they were deceived, or that the facts were as declared; but on the theory that they were deceivers, conspiring to propagate a known lie, the thing is inconceivable. It was not on battle-fields where a possible victory lured them amid the clash and glory of arms and pomp and circumstance of war, but in dungeon walls and prison cells, and alone and friendless, and at the block and stake, that they maintained their resolution. Meantime the religion which they espoused taught them the terrible enormity of the sin they were committing, and that present death they incurred was but the prelude of a deeper and more dreadful death beyond. And yet they marched on with singing and shouting to the glorious martyrdom. The miracles their Master wrought were surpassed by the miracle of the disciples, if they did and suffered all this to give currency to what they knew to be a groundless fabrication.

Seventh. It must be added to this that they were men of the most unblemished character. No men ever taught such purity of morals, no men ever emphasized such spotlessness of life, no men ever so completely abnegated self. To this day and for all time they furnish the world the most exalted type of noble and generous manhood. Even professed doubters proclaim the character of Christ divine for its perfect moral beauty and spiritual perfection. They are willing to accord to him the highest place in possible earthly excellence—the whitest, purest soul ever shrined in clay. And yet these incomparable men, with the immaculate Christ at their head, are to be written down as the inventors and promulgators of the most stupendous fraud that ever befell mankind, not with the advantage of innocent misjudgment, but with the infamy of deliberate deception. If the theory that they were deceivers is to be accepted, we have the anomaly that the greatest benefactors of the race have been those who have plunged it into the deepest delusion; that the

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characters who by common consent stand deservedly highest for all noblest virtues devoted their lives to the fabrication of lies, and sealed the infamy with their blood; that the systematic and groundless falsehood has exerted the most powerful influence for the moral elevation and spiritual improvement of the race. We have this additional anomaly: that this great impostor had been the subject of minute and glowing prophetic heralding for thousands of years, as the Messiah of God; thus making God himself a party to the stupendous imposition.

We have more especially singled out the resurrection of Christ as including all the rest. The argument applies equally to all the rest. The revelation stands thus upon the impregnable substructure of miracle. God sets to it his own appropriate seal. To these signs of truthfulness in the testimony of the witnesses of the resurrection of our Lord ought to be added the general environments of the case, which render the event not improbable. The case certainly gathers force from the fact that it was not a reported resurrection of an ordinary person, sprung suddenly, and without apparent reason, upon an unprepared community. It was the resurrection of a person who had attracted to himself great attention, friendly and unfriendly, by a very exciting and wonderful career, which had just terminated by a public execution. It is safe to say that there never was a case when public attention was more alert and aroused. Parties were intensely interested. The great mass, with the civil and ecclesiastical authorities, were unfavorable; in fact, were intensely hostile. They were determined to break the power and influence of the great pretender. To that end they put him to death. He was in their possession. Could the trick of an assumed and publicly proclaimed resurrection now possibly be a success? Which is the more reasonable: to suppose it real, all the facts considered, or to believe it a fraud? Was it at all unreasonable if we allow that the subject of the

resurrection was a messenger from heaven? In that case might we not suppose the miracle probable? If so, then all the evidence which supports that claim in a measure supports this particular fact. But so also do all the facts which make the imposition impossible. Too much emphasis cannot be put on the fact that it was not secretly proclaimed and stealthily propagated.

We have now adduced, as we believe, three unanswerable proofs that the Christian religion is of supernatural origin: the Bible itself, which contains the system; the prophecies which pervade it, and the miracles wrought by its Founder. The first of these proofs is found in the fact that the doctrinal contents of the book so transcend the age in which it appeared, and in some respects so transcend the unaided power of the human mind, that it is impossible to account for it on any other theory than that it was supernaturally communicated to men who delivered it. The second, which rises to the force of a demonstration, and not merely to that of the strongest probable evidence, is found in the fact that it contains a vast number of prophecies, the fulfillment of which establishes the presence of a superhuman mind in their utterance. This proof is absolute and irresistible, as has been clearly shown. The third, which is also absolute, is found in a line of miracles wrought by the founder of the system, which, like the second, require and demonstrate the presence of a supernatural agent for their performance, and which were wrought to attest the doctrines delivered.

We might safely rest the argument here. Were nothing more possible to be said, the proof is complete that the Bible is of supernatural origin. God has set his seal to it. The attest is in a form which renders it impossible that the attestor should be any but God himself. But while the proof is thus shown

to be demonstrative in the highest sense, out of it grows a line of collateral proofs of such importance that the scheme of evidence demands that they should also be adduced.

The collateral proofs are such as would inevitably attend such a revelation were one given: such as, the essential truth of its contents, and the subjects of which it makes deliverance; the character of the Founder, and of the disciples associated with him in the founding; the effects produced by the deliverance on the characters of the converts, and on the institutions of the age and the welfare of the world at large as it became known and propagated; and the effects that would result were the system universally accepted and regnant over men.

To this list must be added attests wrought in the consciousness of the believer when he submits himself to the guidance of the book—experimental proof; and the proof which is implied in the fact that the system has been able to win faith and a foothold in the world, and in the further fact of the total absence of counter-proof.

It is obvious that a revelation delivered by God, with the supernatural attests already adduced, would furnish these collateral signs. The absence of such proofs would, if not discredit, certainly weaken the supernatural evidence alleged, on the ground that if such supernatural proof had been furnished these corroborations would exist. The collateral proofs thus become more or less essential elements, and in themselves become valuable attests. Alone they would not be wholly adequate to the demands of the system, but they are essential supports.

Let us examine these collateral evidences in their order, beginning with the demand the claim makes on the contents of the revelation. This has been in part anticipated in the

opening argument on the character of the Bible itself, as a proof of its supernatural origin, but we return to give more particular emphasis to it as collateral proof. It is impossible that the Bible in its general contents should not support the proofs, furnished by prophecy and miracle, of its supernatural origin. Collateral proof, when it supplies all the proper incidents and accompaniments of a doctrine or a fact or line of statements, becomes positive evidence. It supports and strengthens positive proof. Circumstantial evidence may even transcend direct testimony in force and power. When all the environments harmonize with testimony the proof reaches the maximum of perfection. It will be found upon the most rigorous examination that the corroborating evidence in support of the direct proofs of revelation is the most complete and conclusive possible. All the incidents are just those that ought to be found. Nothing is wanting: nothing out of accord. It is safe to say that nothing has been discovered to weaken or in any way shake the proof. This fact becomes itself proof. ■

INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

If the Bible be from God, it can contain nothing but truth in its original deliverances. If there be any thing in it false, so much must be eliminated, and if we find it false in respect of matters about which we know, and which we are able to test, it is impossible that we should rationally accept it in respect of matters which are required to be accepted simply on its authority: *falsus in uno, falsus in omnibus*.

We must claim for it, therefore, that it is true in its original deliverances, its recitation of facts, and its historical statements from beginning to end; and true in its doctrines and ethics assumed, implied, and enunciated on a fair rule of interpretation. There are many things in it which, of course, cannot be verified by us—statements which at any time must have been received on faith, as the account of creation and items of secluded individual history; but these are supported by evidence, and there are no such alleged facts which ages of research show not to be true. Its account of creation has been assailed with great and determined virulence once and again, and on different grounds, and at times has seemed to be utterly disproved; but the deeper insight coming from improved learning has only illustrated and established it; so that at one time what has seemed to be a stone of stumbling and rock of offense has turned out to be a tower of strength and arch of beauty. At present it is impossible to allege a fact of geology or a cosmical law which contradicts Moses, while every development of science yet made actually corroborates him. The portions of history which lie back in prehistoric ages, as research progresses in antiquarian relics of various

kinds—monuments, coins, fragments of ancient art, ruins of cities, traditions, rudimental race facts, are found to be accurate. The Jewish nation, in its characteristics, its customs, its stock ideas, is a living witness to this day; the Holy Land—its topography, its monumental hills, its rivers and lakes, its names, and hoary ruins dating into the unknown past except as the history is here given; the topography of Egypt and Syria, so intimately connected with its history, their antiquities, their legends and imperfect records, exhumed from beneath their long-buried cities and pyramids—all are living witnesses to this day. One cannot traverse these lands or linger amid the memorials of their long-gone past, as found yet lying broadcast over these hills and valleys, without feeling that the history given in the sacred books is true to the letter. Nor can one reasonably doubt that a special providence has been employed in preserving these attests for the ages. The confession is fairly extorted from doubt, and skepticism itself abandons the contest. See Rawlinson's "Historical Researches." Whatever questions have been raised or difficulties suggested, the Bible remains yet, with all scholars, in matters of this kind the authority.

When we approach its doctrines and practical ethics we would expect, on any theory of the merely human origin of the Bible, confusion, absurdity, and contradiction; and our expectation would inevitably be met. For every grain of truth we should find tons of error. When we sift human opinions on these subjects we find no exception to this rule. Why should the Bible be the solitary exception if it be not divine? A revelation would prove itself by containing only truth. The Bible meets this demand. This fact is proof. A pretended revelation would inevitably convict itself by containing error, just as all merely human books have shown themselves to be human by being pervaded with error when they have ventured

to make deliverances on matters such as are found in this book. The absence of error is proof of its divine origin.

The cosmology of Moses comes to the front as absolute proof that he wrote as an amanuensis of God; for it is impossible that he should have so written of himself. At the time when he wrote there were no means of knowing the thing of which he wrote. Science has now confirmed his words, and in so doing proves that he wrote by the aid of a power superior to man.

The Bible treats of God; a subject set in the greatest obscurity, and which in every other ancient system is begrimed by the most grotesque and silly fables. What one of its predications can be successfully called in question? What attribute does it ascribe to Him which enlightened reason does not compel us to admit? It begins with the magnificent conception of his eternity, and in fitting phrase names him the "*I am*"—Jehovah: without beginning of days, or end of years; from everlasting to everlasting; the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; with whom there is no variableness, nor shadow of turning. Could language reach a loftier height? Has the learning of ages improved on the statement? It describes him as a pure spirit, incorporeal, without body or parts, invisible, infinite in wisdom, knowledge, and power, and filling the temple of immensity with his presence and glory from eternity to eternity; as the maker, by a word or volition, of the solid framework of the material universe; leading out the starry host by number and calling them by name, and hanging them in their matchless order and harmony over the empty places, so that they stand fast forever; the creator of all life and the spirits of all flesh—of men and angels; the immaculately holy, just, and loving governor of all things, administering the infinite and endless scheme in perfect righteousness and

truth for ever and ever; bearing on the immeasurable and manifold of being, through all stages of development, to culmination following culmination in endless succession without weariness or confusion; amid all the splendor and vastness, a tender and watchful and loving Father, who hears the young ravens when they cry, and who does not permit even a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice.

Will it be possible for human thought ever to improve upon this conception, or to change it in the slightest particular? Here, then, is truth, and truth into whose grandeur we may grow forever, without exhausting or enhancing it; on whose rungs we may ascend throughout eternity. But is it said that it offsets, foils, those just and high conceptions by imputing to him impossible thoughts and petty ways and methods? Does it degrade him, or seem unworthy of him, to represent him as able to care for the humblest worm that crawls upon his footstool, whose little taper he kindles for a moment?

It treats of man. It tells the story of his creation, of his formation out of common earth as to his body, of the inbreathing of his soul, of the stamp and impress of his Maker's image, of his primacy over the earth, of his amenability to law, of his disobedience, of his darkness and sorrow and shame, of his need, of his remorse. Have ages of long research discovered any contradiction of the story? It proclaims man's immortality, and sets before him the hopes and fears of eternity. It tells of God's pity for him, and of a method of divine help to lift him out of his guilt and misery and bring him into a more glorious life after death. Has any body discovered that this is not true?

The peculiar doctrines about which there might be controversy, such as the Trinity, the incarnation, the fall and redemp-

tion of man, with their inclusions, will be fully discussed in their proper place, and fair and full account will be made of all speculative objections to them.

It is an ethical system. Having declared that man is a spirit, immortal and accountable, whose deeds are to be judged, and whose eternity is to be affected by them, it unfolds a system of duty, and classifies things to be avoided as hurtful, and things to be sought as helpful. Is there a single mistake? It affirms man's relations to his Maker, to himself, to his kind, to inferior creatures. Is there a flaw of error discoverable here? Giving due honor to the body and its wants, and higher importance to the mind and its needs, it attaches supremest importance to the moral nature as the very center and citadel of our noblest being. Has a better statement been furnished? Attaching vast importance to external acts, and thus unfolding a perfect scheme of morality, extending to the minutest details of life—averring even that every word and deed shall reappear in judgment to approve or condemn us—it penetrates still deeper, and demands purity in the thought and imagination of the heart and hidden fountains of motive and intent; alleging that “as a man thinketh in his heart so is he.” Has a deeper ethics been discovered? Showing appreciation of the present environ-
 ments and needs of man, as an earthly creature,
 it inculcates honesty, industry, truthfulness, tem-
 perance, charity, obedience to parents, submission to rightful
 authority, tenderness to inferiors, honor to superiors, the ren-
 dering to all their dues, universal love and good-will, sum-
 ming all up in the single law of love contained in the great
 commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all
 thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and
 with all thy strength, and thou shalt love thy neighbor as thy-

Perfection of
ethics.

self." To give force and power to all, it emphasizes the fact of a final judgment, when we shall receive according to our fidelity to these impressive requirements. Has the topmost development of human intellect and heart been able to suggest a flaw or defect in these holy teachings? Can they be improved in simplicity, in depth, in delicacy, in majesty, in fullness, in impressiveness? Suppose the Infinite were about to make a revelation, in what particular would he modify the ethics of the Gospel? What would he add? what take away? What new duty would he impose? What already existing requirement would he revoke? What new motive would he appeal to? What new feeling would he commend or demand?

A revelation, we are sure also, in addition to its veraciousness, must be adapted to meet all the deep wants of those to whom it is given. Besides having truth for the intellect, and law for the life, it must inspire hope Meets the wants of men. and courage and faith. It must come down to humanity in its weakness and guilt, and furnish to it a helping and invigorating hand; must meet it at the point of its greatest wants with fit and adequate supplies; must satisfy its hunger and longings of heart as well as mind. Does the Bible fail in this? It comes to him not as innocent and spirit-whole, but as fallen and guilty, smitten with the despair and remorse of sin, self-condemned, enthralled, and lost. It comes as a healer, with remedies and cures. It diagnoses the disease as radical and deep, and by his own power incurable. It is faithful and searching, even to the dividing asunder of joint and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. It adds fear to fear. It makes sin to be exceeding sinful. It is a rigorous accuser; it has no compromises; it sets the throne in the terrors of unbending righteousness. It sides with and emphasizes conscience always and for ever. It defends law and maintains its authority. It slays the transgressor.

But then it opens a door of hope and escape. It brings him a lamb for sacrifice—a *Redeemer*. It does not make light of his guilt, but it furnishes a ground for pardon; if it does this in theory we shall find that it realizes it in actual experience. It restores the soul, heals its guilt, removes its remorse and brings it peace—puts the abject on his feet, a new creature invested with a new, even the eternal, life. It comforts, consoles, and guides him amid his trials, and temptations, and fears, and his sorrows and bereavements, until it places him before the throne in immaculate robes. Thus in theory it prescribes and provides for the deepest wants of our being—meets the world-wide and ages-continuous cry of the soul—the universal soul—“What must I do to be saved?”

That such contents would characterize a revelation if given is matter of intuitive cognition. God would give just such a book. But this is not the entire strength of the proof. Our knowledge of man shows that he could not be the author of such a book. The contents become then proof positive, if the two premises hold; that is, if the contents are such as God would deliver and such as man could not deliver. Of the first premise a question will not be raised. Of the second all history is proof. With the benefit of the revelation as pedestal, the most exalted minds are not able to transcend it. Without the aid of the revelation, all antiquity and all the paganism of to-day alike bear testimony that there can be no approach. Witness the mythologies of ancient Greece and later Rome, not to speak of the still less creditable superstitions of the more ancient empires; and witness the learned but absurd fables of the most advanced of pagan nations of to-day. What man unaided could do has been abundantly illustrated. There is no reason to suppose that he could in any length of time have improved upon his past in respect of the problems of revelation. The ages have furnished not an increased ray, nor could they ever

on the essential points. They lie beyond man. There is no greater delusion than to imagine, as we stand in the blaze of revelation, that the things which are plain to us in its light could have become plain without its light.

If it is impossible for man now to improve on the sacred record as to its line of facts, and as to its doctrines, and as to its ethical deliverances, and if it infinitely transcends in completeness and perfection all that comes to us from every other quarter present and past: if it cannot be improved, and if it alone among the utterances of the ages sustains this character or any thing approaching it, and if it does this on the claim that it comes from a higher source than human authorship, is it possible rationally to call the statement in question? Especially, can it be called in question when the proof is that its profoundest deliverances, which transcend human power to discover, are found to be in perfect accord with highest reason after they are made known? Who can explain the mystery if God be not the author of the wondrous book?

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EVIDENCE FROM THE CHARACTER OF THE WRITERS.

As a further collateral proof we allege the character of those through whom the revelation came. That the ancient prophets of the Jews were of a high order of men cannot reasonably be doubted. The line extends from Enoch, before the flood, to Malachi, the last of the order. It includes the most illustrious names of antiquity. They were not immaculate. They record their own sins, some of them great and grave. But with their lapses and repentances they were characteristically great and holy men, who rose above their times as the giants of the Nevadas rise above the common forest: Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Daniel, and the rest. They tower not only above their own times, but for probity and moral worth, as well as insight and stalwart character, above the eminent of all times. If character is to count for any thing, and if incorruptible integrity under every strain of trial is to be accounted proof of sincerity and honesty; and if the deliverance of doctrines which transcend the wisdom of the ablest men of the ages is ground of credit; and if the possession of knowledge which proves that they were honored of God with his secrets is a title to worthiness, then these men furnish evidence that they were not only seers in an extraordinary sense, but that they were men sent of God. To discredit them is to ignore and do violence to all signs and proof of credibility; is in effect and in fact to abolish all distinctions between the grossest imposture and the most conspicuous honesty.

But if these things are true of the older prophets, what shall we say of the Founder of the Christian age and his co-adjutors?

Was Christ an impostor? Was Paul a cunning knave? Was John a deluded enthusiast? If Christianity is a fable, Yes. If the proof is that they were not deserving to be so classed, then their honesty is proof of the verity of the system. They were not deceived. Were they deceivers?

It is not without reason that the character of Christ has been alleged as the supremest proof of Christianity. Let it stand as the fulfillment of prophecy, and, as delineated in the sacred writings, invested with miracle, and it is the sum of all proof. There it stands on the pedestal of the four gospels. There it has stood in the gaze of all the world for nearly two thousand years. The verdict of the ages is, that it is faultless. Believer and unbeliever have awarded it perfection. Nothing can be removed without maiming. Nothing can be added without blemish. It is the one faultless image of humanity—sinless and holy; from the manger to the cross an unbroken manifestation of all that is lovely in truth: beautiful in meekness, patient in suffering, unswerving in dutifulness, divine in goodness, flawless in gentleness, courage, and every virtue—the one unspotted impersonation of righteousness that has ever lived upon earth. It was an infidel who wrote of him, “Is it possible that the sacred personage whose history it (the Bible) contains should be a mere man? What sweetness, what purity in his manner! What unaffected gracefulness in his instructions! What sublimity in his maxims! What profound wisdom in his discourses! What presence of mind, what subtlety, what fitness in his replies! How great the command over his passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die, without weakness and without ostentation? The death of Socrates, peacefully philosophizing among his friends, appears the most agreeable that one could wish; that of Jesus, expiring in agonies, abused, insulted, and accused by a

Character of
Christ.

Rousseau's
tribute.

whole nation, is the most horrible that one could fear. Socrates, indeed, in receiving the cup of poison, blessed the weeping executioner who administered it; but Jesus, amidst excruciating tortures, prayed for his merciless tormentors. Yes, if the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus are those of a God." *

It was the infidel Strauss who wrote: "This Christ, as far as he is inseparable from the highest style of religion, is historical, not mythical; is an individual, not a mere symbol. To the historical person of Christ belongs all in his life that exhibits his religious perfection, his discourses, his moral actions, and his passion. He remains the highest model of religion within the reach of our thought, and no perfect piety is possible without his presence in the heart. As little as humanity will ever be without religion, as little will it be without Christ; for to have religion without Christ would be as absurd as to enjoy poetry without regard to Homer or Shakespeare." †

Renan takes a different view, and aims to explain his life on different principles. "I will assume," is the idea, not his exact language 'the main facts about him, as stated by the evangelists, especially in the fourth gospel, to be true, and I will write his life anew—that life as seen especially by a contemplation of the scenes where he lived and died. I will make that life as attractive as possible by all the charms of fancy, romance, poetry. I will go and visit the place where he was born, the place where he was trained, the places where he dwelt, and there, studying his character, inquiring how it was

* "Emile, ou de l'Education," lec. iv. See Dr. Schaff's "Person of Christ," pp. 286-296.

† Strauss, "Life of Christ," quoted by Dr. Schaff, "Person of Christ," pp. 340, 341.

developed at that time and in those scenes—the influences that bore on his childhood, his youth, and his riper years—the successive ideas which he cherished in regard to his own powers, and the unconscious illusions under which he was brought in regard to himself, and the plans which he formed under those illusions, I will set forth his life as the most beautiful and attractive that the world has seen. I will see what I can do with this “young man of profound originality” (p. 125); of “perfect idealism” (p. 140); “who developed his own powers the more he believed in himself” (p. 148); this young man of extraordinary genius, awaking slowly to the consciousness of his great powers; forming his plans under an innocent enthusiasm, on “false views,” as Columbus and Newton did (p. 138), but deeply and permanently affecting the world.’ ‘In the first rank,’ says he, ‘of the grand family of the true sons of God we must place Jesus. Jesus had no visions; God does not speak to him from without; God is in him; he feels that he is with God, and he draws from his heart what he says of his Father. He lives in the bosom of God by uninterrupted communication; he does not see him, but he understands him without need of thunder and the burning bush like Moses, of a revealing tempest like Job, of an oracle like the old Greek sages, of a familiar genius like Socrates, or of an angel Gabriel like Mohammed. He believes that he is in direct communication with God; he believes himself the Son of God. The highest consciousness of God which ever existed in the breast of humanity was that of Jesus.’ ‘Christ, for the first time, gave utterance to the idea upon which shall rest the edifice of the everlasting religion. He founded the pure worship—of no age—of no clime—which shall be that of all lofty souls to the end of time. If other planets have inhabitants endowed with reason and morality, their religion cannot be different from that which Jesus proclaimed at Jacob’s well. The words of Jesus

were a gleam in a thick night; it has taken eighteen hundred years for the eyes of humanity to learn to abide by it. But the gleam shall become the full day; and after the passing through all the circles of error humanity will return to these words, as to the immortal expression of its faith and its hopes.' 'Repose now in thy glory, noble Founder! Thy work is finished; thy divinity is established. Fear no more to see the edifice of thy labors fall by any fault. Henceforth, beyond the range of frailty, thou shalt witness from the heights of divine peace the infinite results of thy acts. For thousands of years the world will defend thee. Banner of our contests, thou shalt be the standard about which the hottest battle will be given. A thousand times more alive, a thousand times more beloved, since thy death than during thy passage here below, thou shalt become the corner-stone of humanity so entirely that to tear thy name from this would be to rend it from its foundations. Complete conqueror of death, take possession of thy kingdom, whither shall follow thee, by the royal road which thou hast traced, ages of worshipers.' 'Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed. His worship will grow young without ceasing; his legend will call forth tears without end; his sufferings will melt the noblest hearts; all ages will proclaim that, among the sons of men, there is none born greater than Jesus.'” *

Thus the character of Christ is in perfect harmony with the claim set up by himself, that he was himself superhuman, the Son of God, a messenger from heaven. "His garments," unseamed and homely as they were, "smell of myrrh and aloes and cassia out of the ivory palaces." The aroma and flavor of heaven saturate his words and deeds in such measure that they fill the ages with sweetness. A peasant of Nazareth, and dressed in its lowly garb, the livery of the skies shines through

* "Life of Jesus," New York, 1864, pp. 50, 51, 104, 215, 351, 376.

his raiment. In the simple language of the people, he spake as man never spake. To him the mysteries of eternity were an open secret. He spoke of his Father and to his Father as one brought up with him; of all heavenly life as the familiar story of his childhood. To him the gates were not closed, not ajar merely, but wide open. He went in and out at will, and was never so much at home as when he opened the celestial mysteries. It is inconceivable that he could have added any more convincing proofs of this high character. Is it possible to harmonize this character and life with the supposition that he was an impostor, or that he was a deluded enthusiast? Is it conceivable, on any principle of the interpretation of what is in man, that it was a mere enthusiast or an artful knave who gave the world the beatitudes and the "Our Father, who art in heaven," and the parable of the prodigal son, and the ritual of the last Supper, and the sermon of Olivet—those memorable words when he beheld the city and wept over it—and that pathetic address to his disciples just before he was parted from them; and that great prayer, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: as thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was:" and the fourteenth chapter of John, beginning, "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me?" What hardihood, what fatuity of impiety, is equal to the pretense that a life clothing itself in such deeds as marked his entire career, and such words as constantly fell from his lips, was the life of an impostor, compared with whom all other

deceivers are immaculate! While man is man the world will reject the blasphemy!

If the character of Christ had been different from what it was—had he been a great scholar in occult science—had he been invested with great social influence or with political rank and power—had he been cunning or ambitious—had he been immoral in public or private life—had he aimed at wealth or power—had he catered to pride, or passion, or prejudice—had he held out promise of earthly rewards or indulgences—had he practiced his arts in secret, and resorted to tricks, or concealments, or legerdemain, or any secret artifices by which to impose upon the credulous—had he avoided scrutiny on the part of his enemies—had he shown weakness in the hour of trial, or vacillation or cowardice in the presence of danger—had he wavered or succumbed at the prospect of death—had he ever faltered, or indicated want of faith in himself or of the doctrines he taught—if any of these things could be alleged with truth against him—and, were he an impostor, some one or all of them would have been certain—there would have been reasonable ground of doubt. But what one of them can be charged against him? Industrious malice and shrewd hate have searched him through and through for ages, weighing all his motives, testing all his acts, scrutinizing all his words, diligently seeking to find a single flaw in his character. Have they succeeded? The most sagacious of his adversaries have confessed with Pilate that they are not able to find a fault in him. Had he been a mere man—much more, had he been a fraud, a deceiver, an impostor—much more still, in view of the extraordinary claim he set up, could this have been possible, would not something have been found in such a career as his, carried on in open day before the multitude, and terminating with his public execution? would not some word, some act, some indication of self-consciousness, some feeling involuntarily manifested, some

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wavering or weakness of some kind, something inconsistent with his high professions, have showed itself? But the search is in vain. Nothing of the kind appears. No trace or flaw of human weakness in the most unguarded moment ever comes to view. From his first appearance at the Jordan to be baptized of John to his translation, through all the years of his eventful ministry, not an incident occurs to mar the harmony between his character and his professed mission. Regarded as unlearned, he surpasses all men in wisdom; having perfect command of all power, he surpasses all men in meekness; absolutely sinless, he surpasses all men in his compassion for the sinful; an exile from heaven by self-banishment in the interest of the lost, he becomes the lowliest citizen of the world himself had made; with perfect ability to avert all suffering from himself, he voluntarily takes the sufferings of the world into his own bosom; accused and maltreated, even to buffeting with the fist and scourging with withes by the people he came to save, he utters no complaint; while being transfixed to a gibbet he prays for his murderers; though rich in the glories of the Godhead, for our sakes he became poor, that we through his poverty might become rich. Can it be possible that these things are consistent with knavery or imposture? Christ is his own credential.

But now concerning the other members of the conclave, what of them? Were they deceived or were they deceivers, or are they to be viewed as witnesses to a truth? One of these characters they must bear.

Were they deceived? For a moment consider what kind of men they seemed to be. What appears in the record concerning them? They were confessedly uneducated men; poor men; some of them fishermen; men of the people among whom they grew up and plied their humble callings; men of hardy common sense; as their after lives show, courageous,

Character of
the disciples.

true, and faithful men; the men who wrote the gospels and epistles; the men who planted the Church, and who themselves claim to have wrought miracles; whom no persecution intimidated; who marched to the cross and the block and the prison without shrinking; who never wavered in their testimony; Peter, John, Matthew, James, men who journeyed with Him from the beginning, "to whom also he showed himself after his passion until the day in which he was taken up;" who testified of that which they had seen with their own eyes, and which they had looked upon, and their own hands had handled. Were these men deceived when they saw "the five thousand fed with seven loaves, and they themselves gathered twelve baskets of fragments?" when they stood at the grave of Lazarus, and saw him come forth "after four days?" when they saw the miracles of healing once and again, and again repeated numerous times during the ministry of three years; when they witnessed the miracle of all miracles, the resurrection of their Master after his crucifixion—is it possible to read the account they give of what they themselves saw and did, and believe that they were the victims of delusion? Were the matters which they relate things about which it was possible they should be mistaken? The theory of delusion is manifestly preposterous. If the character of Christ itself were not a guarantee against the possibility that he would attempt to deceive them, all the circumstances show that it was impossible that they should have been imposed upon. No candid mind can read the gospels and come to the conclusion that the disciples and apostles and the multitude who attended the ministry and witnessed the miracles of Christ were the prey of an artful deceiver.

Were they deceivers? Were they a conclave of knaves who deliberately undertook to palm off a fraud upon their neigh-

bors and kinsmen? Did they invent the hero and the story? Was the whole thing a fabrication, or was there a bare thread of truth running through a web of fiction? Let us suppose something of the kind; it will then remain that we harmonize the facts with the theory. Something of ^{Witnesses not} deceivers. the kind has been attempted, and there is room for the supposition that not a few have some such imagination vaguely floating in their minds with enough influence to bewilder them, and leave them in the bogs of doubt or distressing and destructive uncertainty, the easy prey of artful infidels. Ignorant of the grounds of faith and too weak to grapple with the question, and with a leaning to the side of unbelief through desire to escape from the restraints of a faith that limits their indulgences, they easily assume the role of the skeptic, and muster in the following of revilers and scoffers. There is but little hope of such. There is not enough of the serious elements of sincerity and honesty in them, as a rule, to build hope upon. They will not be reached by argument. But there are honest minds who will weigh reasons, and who, troubled with questions, are deeply anxious to find the truth. For the sake of such, and for our own sakes, who have come into the rest of faith, many of us after just such a struggle of doubt, we come to the examination of the theory that the founders of the scheme were deceivers.

The parties now to pass in review are the immediate disciples of our Lord and the early converts, who were in a position to know of the facts alleged with respect to our Lord's person and character, and with respect to his teach- ^{The witnesses.} ing and ministry of doctrine, and with respect to his miraculous works, and with respect to his personal trial and public execution, and with respect to his resurrection and ascension.

It is quite important before we enter upon this examination, that is, the examination of the testimony and trustworthiness of

these witnesses, that we refresh our minds with a recollection of the circumstances under which they become witnesses—how they become connected with the case—how, in fact, the case arose. This *résumé* will bring the case before us in proper form, and put us and the witnesses in such relations as will enable us to fix the proper value on their testimony.

The scene of the transaction is Judea. All the parties to it are Jews. Our Lord himself, as to his humanity, was a descendant of Abraham. The disciples were natives of the region adjacent to Jerusalem. At the time when the history opens there was a prevailing expectation of the appearance of the long-time predicted Messiah. John the Baptist was in the height of his ministry. The nation was phenomenally awakened with his announcement that the Lord was at hand, and his arousing appeals to the people that they should repent and prepare to receive him. Multitudes were receiving baptism at his hand. It was unquestionably a time of deep and wide-spread excitement. Attention was fully aroused. Expectation was alert. The nation was moved. The appeals of the weird prophet of the wilderness had stirred not only the masses in remote districts, but the capital and the public authorities were profoundly agitated.

For hundreds of years the Jewish nation had been prominent as one of the foremost nations of the earth. Its capital was scarcely less renowned than Rome itself; in some respects more renowned than many of the capitals of the older or then regnant empires of the world. The Old Testament, as we have it to-day, with its tables of the law, its Moses and the prophets, its Psalms of David and prophecies of Isaiah and Daniel, and its glorious ritual were then shedding their light in the temple of Moriah. The very words of Messianic prophecy which we read they read. They were trained in all the laws of Moses

and history of the sacred books, which gave an account of God's doings with their fathers. They were the inheritors of the promises. They had all the pride of their race as the peculiar people of God. With lofty scorn they declared that they had Abraham to their father, as they looked with contempt upon surrounding nations of Gentiles. Even then their temple, standing on the foundation of the ancient temple of Solomon, though not equal in glory to its predecessor, was the most glorious temple in the world. The vast sums which Herod laid out in adorning the temple gave it the most magnificent appearance. Josephus says of it: "Its appearance had every thing that could strike the mind and astonish the sight. For it was on every side covered with solid plates of gold, so that when the sun rose upon it it reflected such a strong and dazzling effulgence that the eye of the beholder was obliged to turn away from it, being no more able to sustain its radiance than the splendor of the sun." Perhaps there was never more diffused intelligence in the nation, not even in the time of their greatest prosperity, than there was at that time. Rome surpassed them in learning and power, and Greece had exceeded them in culture, but in respect of religious and divine knowledge no nation then or at any previous time compared with them. This we know to be true, for we are now standing—that is, the time of which we are now writing—is within the clear shining of the historic age.

It was at this center of ancient civilization and of the Jewish Church, and at this time of the golden age of learning—the proud Augustan age of Rome—that Christ appeared and announced himself to this ancient people of God as their Messiah—the promised seed of Abraham. It was just before the time of Josephus, the eminent historian of his race, and of Philo, the eminent scholar of the age. At this temple Christ unfolded his mission.

The preaching of John Baptist, and the general expectation of the appearance any day of the Messiah, must inevitably turn attention at once to any pretender. Undoubtedly, the prevailing idea was that the Messiah would be a conspicuous person. There were vague dreams, perhaps, that he would be a great temporal prince, who would break the Roman yoke and restore the luster of the throne of David. There is abundant proof that the people at large, and the teachers as well, entirely misunderstood the nature of his mission. A spiritual kingdom and the spiritual doctrines clearly predicted in their holy books were not apprehended by them. The new age to be introduced and the new dispensation were not grasped by them. They thought only of the perpetuation and advancement to greater distinction than ever before of the ancient ritual and state.

When now the lowly Nazarene appeared in his seamless blouse they were not simply disappointed, they were filled with rage and gnashed upon him. He was promptly rejected by the leaders of the nation. Thus the great drama of the ages opened. It was not propitious, certainly, if we think merely of its immediate and easy success; but, as certainly, it was propitious as setting the nation on its guard and as a defense against imposture. It arrayed every man's prejudice against him. The prophecy was fulfilled; he was "as a root out of a dry ground; . . . he was despised and rejected of men." Danger immediately surrounded him. Pagan and Jew, Herod and Pilate, joined hands against him. Scribes and Pharisees made common cause to denounce and oppose him. The nation, the Church, and the regnant foreign government combined in the open hostility. Herod opened the role of blood by cutting off the head of John. The fire of hate and disappointment kindled among the people. Surely imposture never encountered a stronger force for its immediate extermination: weakness

single-handed against power, prejudice, passion, pride, rage; bold criticism, scorn, and brutal force, arrayed against the pretender.

Had he been but a pretender is it problematic what the result must have been? Why did the sensation carry over into a second week? How was it that the Nazarene stood up for a single day? How was it that his name did not go to history with that of Thendas and other pretenders? There can be but one answer: He was the Christ of God. He opened his mouth with such words as man never spake. Despite their rage they were compelled to listen. He did such works as no man ever did; they were compelled to marvel and ponder. Truth wins. There was danger in the air. Anger rose to white heat. There were sounds of wrathful mobs. But despite it all the crowds attended him. He went to the wilderness; the people deserted their villages and the city to follow him. A few were convinced, and espoused his cause—joined themselves to him. The crowd of his followers still increased. The fiercer the opposition, the more bloody the persecution, the greater became the enthusiasm. Three years rolled by. His fame and the fame of his miracles spread to other countries. The alarms of Church and State were excited to the utmost.

Finally he stands as a culprit at Pilate's judgment-seat. A crown of thorns encircles his brow, and the flowing blood streams down over his face and garments. He is arrayed in purple, and shouts of derision swell through the corridors and the court-room. They take him out and scourge and buffet him. He opens not his mouth. He is condemned to the death of a malefactor. Yonder he goes up the sides of Calvary, staggering beneath the cross on which he is to be executed. There are two thieves on gibbets, one upon his right hand, the other upon his left. As he hangs there the bloodthirsty throng shout, "He saved others; himself he cannot save. If he be the

King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him." Has he the bearing of a deceiver?

Sad ending of the career of a beautiful enthusiast or impostor—which? Is it the ending? So it would seem; so indeed it must have been, had he been either enthusiast or knave; but history makes another record. His death, which to an enthusiast or deceiver would have finished his shame, proved to be but the beginning of his triumph. The bloody tragedy only inaugurated his great work. The cross was converted into a talisman—the high pulpit from which his Gospel would ring down the centuries, the altar of sacrifice to which the nations would come for healing and atonement. The silent, sinless Sufferer that day was cementing the foundations of the everlasting kingdom. His expiring cry shook the gates of hell.

There were many broken hearts around that cross that day. Many of them had seen his miracles and heard his matchless words. Joseph of Arimathea, an honorable man, begged his body, and, in spices, laid it, scarred and mangled, in his own new tomb.

Jesus had said while yet alive, that if they should put him to death he would rise again. Soldiers are stationed to guard his tomb. This was well. It is the third morning. The report has gone into the city that a vision of angels had surprised the soldiers, and that Christ had risen. A week or two passes and the scattered disciples gather again. They boldly declare his resurrection. The excitement becomes tenfold greater. Forty days after, thousands rush to hear Peter preach. Three thousand are converted in one day. The drama of blood thickens. They have stoned Stephen to death. Edicts are published forbidding any man, on pain of death, to speak any more in this name. The disciples are scourged. It is certain that the power of the nation will now be employed to extinguish the fanaticism. Pity will not spare any who accept the new faith.

This is the state of the case when these witnesses take up the work bequeathed them by their slaughtered Master.

How marvelous the overrulings of providence! That which would have been fatal to a fraud is made the sure and direct helper to the truth. "The wrath of man" is converted into a means of working glory to his Maker. Plans for extirpation become arrangements for furtherance of the truth. Had Christ been simply discarded, or if he had been quietly received as the Messiah, possibly ere this the world would have known nothing of him, or at most he would have appeared in history as a Jewish reformer of amiable and beautiful character and of legendary fame. We do not see how he would ever have reached the world's heart and transformed the ages but by the trials he endured. His scheme needed Calvary to furnish the proof which should carry conviction to humanity that he was more than an enthusiast; more than a Jewish prophet merely; that he was not a deceiver but a Redeemer. Tragedy must lie along his path. Golgotha for the Master and persecutions and martyrdom for many of the disciples were the needed monumental proofs of the glory of the one and the sincerity of the others. Certain it is that no one who is not blinded by pride or passion can fail to see in them the highest credentials of honesty and truth. We are now prepared to examine the question, Were they deceivers? We have already seen the reasons why we are estopped from supposing that the Master was a deceiver. All these reasons stand for the disciples as well as the Master; for if he was neither deceived nor a deceiver how could the disciples be, when they testify of him what he declared concerning himself? The two stand or fall together. If the Master was not a deceiver they were not; and, *vice versa*, if they were not deceivers he was not.

Character counts for much in determining the trustworthiness of testimony, but in the present case it is quite impossible to prove character by direct testimony. The record says but

little upon the subject, and it is *ex parte*. *Prima facie*, everything seems to be against them, either against their sanity or against their honesty. The case is seemingly self-convicting. They undertake too much. It looks as if the scheme must break down of its own weight. Every one feels this at the start. They themselves must have felt it.

Does it occur to you that this circumstance is itself a strong proof that they were not deceivers? When men project a fraud they are not likely to load it with weights which they know are certain to insure its failure. The stupendousness of the scheme in this case argues their high conviction of its truth. Nothing but such a conviction—a conviction of the superhuman character of the Master and of the reality of his miraculous power—can account for their undertaking. Had they not believed in his resurrection the sun that set with him upon the gibbet would have closed in darkness forever over their scheme. That their perseverance survived that crucifixion day itself proves that they were not deceivers—that they stood upon the rock of solid conviction.

For consider: What motive could they have had to undertake to palm off a fraud at the start? Had they any reason to expect gain of any kind out of it? Was it a natural thing for Jews, with their traditional faith, to engage in such a scheme? If there might have been some one who would be wicked and foolish enough to project a fraud of this kind was he likely to find a following?

But allow that by some unaccountable fatuity some few adventurers might be found to undertake so great a folly for some possible notoriety or with the hope of gain of some sort, what could induce them to persevere now, when the chief conspirator under whose leadership they were inveigled into it hung upon a gibbet before their eyes? They had nothing to hope from him any more.

No motive to
fraud.

expect gain of any kind out of it? Was it a natural thing for Jews, with their traditional faith, to

If they were deceivers they knew the fraud. What motive could have inspired them? They were already under ban—a virtual price upon their heads—socially outcasts. Their leader had perished on the gibbet; John's head, one of the co-conspirators, had been already placed upon a charger before the Master had come to grief. They could anticipate no better fate. Poverty, persecution, and death were before them. Success, had it been possible, had nothing for them. It was impossible they should not see all this. Had they been drawn into the scheme by some unaccountable fanaticism at first, it is impossible that they should not now abandon it. That they did not is proof that they had unbroken faith in their more-than-ever adored Master. Nothing but that accounts for their persistence to the forsaking of all things, and even unto death. Theirs was no ordinary faith. It endured a strain never equaled. What they had seen and known is the only explanation. They had seen not simply the miracles of the Master's three years' ministry, but last—and that which made them willing to follow him even to death, which in fact made it impossible for them to hold their peace—they had seen him and held converse with him after his resurrection. What now were poverty, scourgings, the stake itself? Nothing, if we allow that they were sincere. The miracle by which their crucified Lord was given back to them made them victors over all possible fear of persecution or death itself.

The two great facts meet us: there were no motives for fraud; the motives were all the other way—the motives of their traditional faith as Jews, the motives of self-interest, the motives of fear, all the motives that influence the actions of men; and no explanation of their conduct under the ordeal of awful persecution to which they exposed themselves can be offered but their profound sincerity. Let it not be forgotten that it was not a temporary storm that burst upon them which

soon exhausted its fury. They might have hidden from that, and by some fatuity, when quiet was restored, secretly have attempted to work upon the credulity of those who had half given them their faith. The tempest grew in fierceness. First one fell under its fury and then another, until nearly all the apostles and disciples had followed their Master some of them to even a more terrible execution than he had suffered. The converts, many of whom had known the Lord and witnessed his miracles, followed in the ensanguined procession. History furnishes nothing like it. It is possible to conceive that *delusion* might account for persistence under some opposition, or even slight danger, but it is impossible that *deceivers* should exhibit such courage and perseverance under the circumstances which existed in this case.

If you take the leaders individually, what impression do they make on you? Is their bearing that of impostors? Impostors have ulterior ends. Do you discover that they had any? Impostors have esoteric methods; they practice occult arts; they play upon the imagination; they invest themselves in mystery; they avoid scrutiny. Does it appear that this conclave resorted to any of these things? Was it not the challenge of the chief of them, publicly made, "I spake openly to the world; I ever taught in the synagogue and in the temple, whither the Jews always resort; and in secret have I said nothing." John xviii, 20.

Take the four evangelists: do you find any thing in their simple, beautiful narratives that savors of cunning or art or deceit?—the frank Matthew, the unconventional Mark, the scholarly Luke, the transparent John. They were all confessors in spirit, three of them probably martyrs in fact.

John, tradition tells, was condemned to suffer death by being plunged into a caldron of boiling oil, but, floating unharmed, was taken out and banished to a lonely island in the Ægean Sea, he received the visions of the Apocalypse, after which he

The bearing of
the witnesses
not that of im-
postors.

died a natural death, probably at Ephesus, the only one of the original twelve except Judas Iscariot that did not seal their testimony with their blood. Did any of them ever show signs of weakening? Is it possible that such a record can be harmonized with the theory that they were deceivers?

Was Peter a conspirator of fraud? He denied his Master when the trial was proceeding before Pilate's court. He even cursed and swore that he never knew him. The record of shame is faithfully made. But he repented, and became one of the chiefest apostles afterward. When, after a long and eventful apostleship, and many revelations and many miracles wrought by him and wrought for him, he was condemned to martyrdom—to the same death which his Lord had suffered, and of which he was a witness—he prayed, undisputed tradition tells us, not that he might escape, not that he might suffer some easier death, but that he might have the privilege of being crucified head downward, a much more agonizing death; accounting himself not worthy to die as his Master had on account of that hour of weakness when he had denied him. Does that look like a deceiver?

Was Paul a deceiver? He had been a bloody persecutor, haling men and women to prison, and consenting to their death. That was bad enough, one would think, almost to condemn him. But he became the chief apostle. Read the story of his conversion, then read the story of his life. As you follow him from Jerusalem to Rome, leaving his trail in blood; whipped, scourged, beaten, stoned, left as dead; in perils by land, in perils by sea, in perils of false brethren through years, until he became Paul the aged; exposed to hunger and nakedness and famine, in stocks and prisons—does he look like a deceiver? Was it a deceiver that uttered those brave words before Felix and Agrippa? that wrote the thirteenth and fifteenth chapters of First Corinth-

ians, and all the words of the epistles that bear his name? that wrote from the Mamertine prison in Rome the brave words to his son Timothy: "For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing?"

Brave old hero! Scarred from head to foot, honored more than all his colleagues, does he, as he comes forth from that Mamertine dungeon between Roman lictors, his gray hairs bared to the day and his hands bound in fetters, does he, as he calmly lays his head upon that Roman block, make you think of a deceiver? No! no! It is impossible. Christianity cannot be accounted for on the theory of fraud. Religions have been founded by impostors. Christianity is not one of them. The character of the Founder and of his disciples alone considered is sufficient to put to silence any suspicion of that kind. They were neither deceived nor deceivers. The Master was what he claimed to be. They were honest witnesses as to his teachings, miracles, and manner of life. The proof founded on the facts is, that Christianity is a supernatural religion, delivered to men in a supernatural way, and accompanied by supernatural proofs.

ARGUMENT FROM SUCCESSFUL PROPAGATION.

WE allege, as a further proof in support of the position that Christianity is what it claims to be, the fact of its successful propagation. Success is not *prima facie* evidence of truth. It is proof in this case. The success can only be accounted for on the ground of truth. Had it not been true it could not have survived. It did survive. It successfully established itself. It convinced and converted its enemies. It has been able for nearly two thousand years to withstand every form of attack. Its buckler is yet unpierced. The only reason that can be assigned for its success is, that it has been able to carry conviction of its truth in the face of opposition and every attempt to invalidate it. Success under the circumstances becomes proof.

Success under the circumstances becomes proof.

The presence among men at any time of any diffused system of thought, or ritual observances, or peculiar customs or rites, or widely disseminated forms of religious faith and practice, must be susceptible of some explanation. It ought in most cases to be possible to trace it to its origin and test its worthiness. Its existence proves nothing but that it exists and has been originated. The explanation of its origin may not always be at hand, but it must be possible always to test its right to exist. That is the duty and function of reason. Long-continued existence and widely diffused prevalence count for something, but, in themselves considered, are not data from which to infer their right to exist. Their only right to exist must be in their truth, or in so far as they are founded in or on truth. Every system of thought—philosophic, scientific, economic, ethical, religious—is amenable to this law.

Existence of the scheme some proof.

We propose to apply this principle to the case in hand. The argument now to be examined is founded on the fact of its successful establishment. We return for a moment to emphasize the fact that mere success is of no evidential value for establishing the worthiness of that which succeeds. The success, merely as success, does not prove truth—in fact, counts for nothing. Buddhism is the religious faith of one third of the human race, and has been for half a thousand years before the Christian era. Mohammedanism is more extensive than Christianity, and has been growing and spreading for more than twelve hundred years. If mere success were proof of truth their truth would be established.

In point of fact, imposture is likely to succeed if it be not loaded down with extraneous conditions of failure. There exists under every degree of development—from the lowest barbarism to the highest culture—abundant food for successful imposture. Not unfrequently the most elevated in social rank are the readiest victims. There is not in the world a finer opportunity for successful deception than in Boston and London and Berlin, the high-water points of modern civilization. Knavery specially battens in these great centers of learning, and the fools and the fooled are not confined to the common crowd; not unfrequently they are found among the so-called “learned class”—the *élite*. There could scarcely be a better illustration of this truth than in the prevalence of liberalism in these centers. Liberalism is a technic for broad-mindedness. The term is assumed and flaunted as notification that the wearer has outgrown the superstitions. Unfledged collegians affect it. Pulpiters of no faith hang it out to catch gulls. It flourishes chiefly among apers of learning and among the *habitués* of lecture halls, where shallow *littérateurs* and sciolistic pretenders of both sexes exhibit borrowed scraps of tawdry scientific drivel on subjects of which neither the lecturer nor the

Imposture likely to succeed.

audience knows any thing ; the frogs, they are, of the sixth vial of the Patmos vision, spawned by the sorosis and esoteric brotherhood. Imposture is an easy art. But it is also easy to expose. No imposture succeeds because it is difficult of exposure, but because it is pleasing to multitudes to be deluded and profitable to the trickster to play upon them. Take modern necromancy, mildly called Spiritualism, prevalent to-day among the *bon-ton* of these centers of liberalism, and the kindred knaveries of "mind cure," "Christian science," "metaphysical healing," "faith cure," and other cognate quackeries ; it is not difficult to find the secret of their success. Two words unravel the phenomenon—knaves and victims. All sensible people know the imposture ; even the befooled know it, but they like it. Each imposture has been exposed time and again. The mountebanks have been caught and stripped. But that does not end the business. The reason is patent. The knave gets well paid : that will always keep up the supply. The gullions love to be gulled : that keeps up the supply of victims. The trade flourishes. Mere success proves nothing. But success under certain conditions is demonstration.

To account for any religion two things must be taken into the account : first, man is a religious being ; he must have some religion. Second, the character of the particular religion will determine whether it is of a divine or human origin—true or false.

Since man is naturally religious he will either invent a religion or be supplied with one ready-made. Most of the religions have been invented and supplied by Religions and their inventors. distinguished religionists.

The originators of religions, even when the religion is wholly groundless, that is, void of truth, or when it contains only a moiety of truth, are not necessarily deceivers, and may be

saintly—by far the best men of their age, and real reformers and helpers toward some better approach to truth. There is some truth in every religion, by whomsoever invented. But religions may be classed as impostures, that is, the invention of bad men for ulterior ends; as natural religions, the growth of religious ideas and rites in devout minds struggling for the truth; and as religion revealed from heaven. Any one of these types may become wide-spread and established for ages. Of the first, susceptible of being shown to be such, Mohammedanism may be named as a conspicuous example; of the second, Buddhism and Confucianism may be named as distinguished types. The ancient and modern mythologies belong to this class. No religion, either of the first or second class, is so intrenched as to be difficult to expose. It is not hard to prove Mohammed an impostor and his religion false. That fact makes it certain that it will vanish away. It lives now because it is imposed by force, and because the light which strips it has not extended to its deluded followers. It is not hard to expose the religions of the East. They are not intrenched in proofs which are difficult to overthrow. They are great systems of absurdity. They live only until knowledge becomes diffused among their votaries. Advancing knowledge will vacate all their rites and empty all their temples. Nothing is more certain than that no one of the religions of the world coming under either the first or second class has in it the possibility of existing after knowledge has diffused itself over the nations. No power of either sword or custom can maintain them after ignorance is banished and disenthralled reason comes to its throne. Both imposture and the well-meant fables of superstition will perish together.

But while success alone is no proof of the truth or worthiness of that which succeeds, success under certain conditions not only lends a probability to it, but may amount to strong proof

if not absolute demonstration. The successful propagation of the Christian religion is proof of this kind.

To bring out the force of this argument one or two preliminary statements will be serviceable.

The Christian religion has about it none of the marks of a human invention—a made article. It is not a development — not an outcome of improved and perfected thought; nor a theory or system which can be traced through successive stages of effort; nor to some happy stroke of genius. Marks of the Christian religion. The old and vanished mythologies of Greece and Rome, and the ancient superstitions of the East that still enthrall more than half the world, show what man can do in the way of inventing a religion under the most favorable circumstances. If genius and learning could have developed a religion that would be able to withstand criticism and meet and satisfy the needs of the race, surely there never was a better opportunity to achieve the result than with the Greeks. Their sages and philosophers have not been surpassed to this day for acuteness. They had outgrown the traditional mythologies. The most gifted among them employed all their great powers to replace the worn-out and effete fables with something better. Socrates devoted himself to the elaboration of ethics. Plato followed his great master with matchless powers to purify the nation's mind as to the doctrine concerning the gods and the immortality of the human soul. Left to himself, no man has been able to add any thing to the teaching of these greatest of the heathen sages to this day. But despite all their learning and honest zeal the effort proved utterly abortive. The prophets and sages of the East, beginning earlier and continuing until now, consecrated all their genius to the religious problem. Nothing more proves the uneradicable religious nature of man than the ages-long struggle. In some respects the sages of the Orient surpassed the philosophers and

poets of the West. Their esoteric lore is the marvel of admiring students in the nineteenth century. But the still regnant superstitions proclaim how futile has been all their effort, and establish the truth that "man by wisdom knows not God." All these huge superstitions of the East and West bear one humiliating testimony to the kind of religion man can invent.

The savants of our age seem inclined to experiment in the same direction. We hear talk of a new religion. During the reign of terror in France, a century ago, that was the popular idea. Declaring the Christian religion a thing of the past, they proposed a new religion for the millennium of liberty, fraternity, and equality, to which, through seas of blood and carnage, the redeemed nation had come. You know the result. The dream of a renovated religion still exists. We are making some progress here in America. The elements are as yet rather chaotic, but there is expectancy that out of the confusion order will soon come. There are outgivings in our magazines; there are a hundred conclaves incubating; there are esoteric nurses preparing for the advent; "the mountain is laboring." Even now we have finished a new god or two, but are not quite agreed upon the name. We work innumerable miracles, but as yet they are wee things. We materialize spirit and bring back our kindred as far down the line as to the chimpanzee, and are expecting to bridge the chasm between him and the polliwog soon. There is as yet not perfect agreement whether to retain Christ or not, but the prospect is that he will be blackballed by the wiseacres of the coming sect. We have about harmonized on ethics; the fundamental principle is determined: it is the law of necessity. The suffrages all go for no responsibility. It is not quite decided yet whether we will keep up the old hoax of immortality—some vote for it. It is fully settled that Christianity must go—has gone—but we will adopt such parts of the ritual as will be convenient. What we will

carry over will perhaps be determined by each one for himself. We believe firmly in necessity, but are great sticklers for freedom. The new religion will be a genuine Yankee production. The wet-nurses are already engaged to care for the bantling. At our great center we can show you a genuine pagan temple in full blast, with a savage in its pulpit. We will agree in advance to cure all your infirmities for a dollar. We open and shut the new kingdom for simply the gate-fees. We have priests and priestesses who will surprise you with the broadness of their wisdom, and all for only a very small price. Remember, we have cast off the superstition about a supernatural religion and the old traditional Christ; but likewise observe, that we can swallow all the gods of the Pantheon, and all the old-wives' fables that our new teachers prepare for us, at a single opening of the esophagus. It is delicious to believe riddles, now that we have got rid of this superstition about Christ. We even incline to turn Hindus. We have esoteric clubs, and we have great fondness for the monkeys, and may conclude to import some of the Benares gods. If we do not have a new religion it will be because we cannot make one. All the man-made religions are alike. We know them at first sight by the trade-mark. It is easy to trace them to the shop. It is easy to foresee their end.

The Christian religion has furnished the demonstration that it is not man-made, not only by the absence of all the signs which denote a human origin, nor yet merely by not resembling any other religion, nor yet still by simply so infinitely transcending all others as to prove its superhuman origin, but by the coincident fact that it can neither be repressed nor destroyed by man.

Before we introduce the argument from its successful propagation it is well to call attention once more to the circumstances under which it was introduced. This has a bearing on

the argument. If it was clearly not a development or invention, it is also true that it did not get a foothold by stealth or by the accident of inattention. The two facts are conspicuous. The battle raged around its cradle. It had to win its first converts under fire.

We separate these two facts. First, notice the fact that it was born full-grown. There is no more wonderful fact than this. It stands parallel with the other matchless wonder, the unique character of its Founder. There was nothing tentative in it. It left no chance for modification or improvement either by way of addition or correction. It staked all on the hazard of being able to stand forever without readjustment, or that tampering which every human invention, or idea even, must submit to under unforeseen agencies. There was no place left for an after-thought; for the addendum of riper learnings or experience in future ages of progress. This is a most significant fact. It not only did not provide for amendment or modification, but, further than that, it forbade all attempt at improvement, attaching the highest penalty, even to the blotting out of his name from the book of life who should add any thing to or take any thing from it, even to a jot or tittle. A still more significant fact is, not that it forbade all amendment, but that its perfection is such that it precludes any. The progress of the race in experimental ethics, in social development, in knowledge of government, in science, in philosophy, in religion, in all kinds of culture, has failed to discover a single particular in which amendment by either addition or subtraction is possible.

The system stands to-day precisely as the Master left it. Thousands of *critiques* have been written. Contending sects have disputed over it. Enemies and friends have attempted to rend or mend the seamless garment. It has been tortured word by word and sentence by sentence. But there it stands as

it was delivered. Were it human this fact would insure its ruin and abandonment. Man has never been able to make any thing that would admit of no modification. If it were of God it could not admit of improvement, and that it does not is proof of its divine origin.

The second point made is, that it was at first published openly, not in a corner. Nothing was concealed, nothing hid. It did not grow up in private for a time until it acquired strength or until means of exposure were out of hand. It did not retain its story of wonders until the actors and the subjects and witnesses were dead, or inaccessible, or unknown. It did not gain a following and headway secretly before the authorities were aware of it. It was not left, as a thing not deserving attention, to take root before active opposition was aroused. It immediately excited the whole nation. It was the one all-engrossing sensation. It was the tumultuous theme from one end of the land to the other. Miracle crowded miracle in the precincts of the temple, in the presence of crowds on the highways in the places of concourse. It was three years of unbroken and constantly augmenting excitement. Resistance was active. Three years brought the hero to the cross, and edicts against all attempts to speak any more in his name, under severest penalties. These are facts admitted by the great historian of the "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." He was not a friend, but an enemy; but as a result of the most learned and exhaustive research he is compelled to acknowledge and record the fact. No critic has ventured to dispute it.

The next fact important to notice is, that while Christ's enemies resorted to force no force was employed by himself, though declaring his ability to command legions of angels; and

though showing absolute power of self-defense, if he had so chosen, he never put forth any power for self-defense—"was as ^{Christianity} a lamb led to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb ^{employed no} before the shearers," not even opening his mouth in a single word either of argument, remonstrance, or entreaty. Meekly he bowed to authority and submitted to the death of the cross. His enemies had it all their own way. He not only did not employ his own power, which he had demonstrated to be omnipotent, but he forbade his disciples to resort to self-defense; when smitten on one cheek they were to turn the other. Peter attempted to use the sword, cutting off the ear of one of the officers who came to arrest the Master. He immediately wrought a miracle by restoring the ear, and rebuked his disciple with the declaration "that he that took the sword should perish by the sword."

Before he parted from his disciples he forewarned them, and all who should espouse his cause, "that what they (his enemies) had done in the green tree they would do in the dry;" that having killed the Master they would also kill the disciples; they would be hunted down like partridges of the mountains; the fathers would forsake the children; their enemies would be those of their own household; and they would torture them and put them to death. He would permit it to be so. He would not deliver them from their tormentors. They must forsake all and follow him if they would be his disciples, with the prospect of a martyr's death all but certain.

He chose certain of them to organize the kingdom. They were simply to go and preach: proclaim what he had done and said throughout the whole world—go without purse or scrip, and go with the certainty that persecution, and bonds, and death awaited them in every city! But he gave them this encouragement, that he would go with them, an unseen presence but still a comforting presence; not to turn

away the sword, but to make them able to bear it; to be a mouth and wisdom to them; to give success to their message; through them, though they should be slain, he would raise up an everlasting kingdom that should extend over the whole earth; the sword would ultimately get tired of blood, and then would come peace; and most of all, if they should prove faithful unto death he would give them a crown of life, and they should share his kingdom and glory with him forever. On any human calculation could such a scheme succeed? If the Founder had been a fraud, no! If he was what he pretended to be, yes! Nothing is more certain than that a brief spasm would have ended the tragic farce had Christ been an impostor and his disciples either dupes or co-conspirators. It was impossible that it should be otherwise.

That it was not thus is high proof that its Founder and his co-adjutors were divine messengers, and that Christianity is a divine system. The triplex force that made it a success, and made it fill out the measure of the promise of its Founder, was his divine character, the truths he delivered, and the miracles he wrought. They were the only things ever appealed to—no other means were permitted to be employed. This is a fact of great significance. The character of Christ, the words he spoke, and the miracles he wrought built the kingdom. With these, and these alone, the disciples went forth in twos to the conquest of the world. In Jerusalem, right where the history transpired, among the spectators and witnesses of the crucifixion, and those who had heard and seen the Lord, while Calvary yet smoked with the Victim's blood, and when a similar fate threatened every convert, three thousand were added to the Church in one day. The headsman's ax had no power to stop it. The disciples went every-where preaching throughout the cities of Syria and Asia Minor; they went over into Greece

Character of
Christ and his
words and
works built the
kingdom.

and on to Rome, planting churches in all the principal cities of the widely extended empire of the Cæsars. The gibbet was busy, but only sped the cause. It is not known how many were slain or put to death in some form; but it amounted in those early years to many scores of thousands. The Master kept his promise. Wherever they went preaching he was with them. His wisdom vouchsafed them made them equal to every emergency. They were able to silence and convince their enemies. Death lost its terror to them. They went shouting to the stake. The heathen converts emulated each other for the martyr's crown. The authorities finally wearied of blood spilled to no profit. The cause of it all was the simple preaching of Jesus and the resurrection. In three hundred years Christianity had spread from the eastern borders of Syria to the coasts of Spain, and from Britain to Africa along the entire coast of the Mediterranean; and Constantine, after first revoking all the edicts against the Christians, and becoming himself a convert, by the authority of the senate abolished all heathen worship throughout the Roman empire, and converted all the old heathen temples into churches for the worship of Christ. Pagan Rome became Christian Rome. It was better for Christianity to bleed than to be established by imperial edict, as the after-history abundantly proves. But the fact was as stated. How are we to account for this success? It must be accounted for. The historian of the "Decline and Fall," Gibbon, has undertaken to do it. Before we take up his explanation let us answer the question.

Is it not absolutely certain that if there had not been faith the cause must have perished? Do we not know enough of man to enable us to know that doubt would have cowered before so dreadful an ordeal? Is it possible to conceive that, with the knowledge that the disciples and converts must have had that it was a fraud, if so be it was, they should have gone

forward in the face of such perils and sufferings? The thing is incredible; am I not safe in saying impossible?

It was simple faith, then, that supported. Let the reader stop right here, and read the eleventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews. He will there learn the power of faith. The disciples had faith. Their preaching carried conviction and produced faith in those that heard. Faith made the converts as strong as their teachers.

Faith the secret of success.

But on what principle can we account for the faith? How did these disciples come by their faith? Men do not acquire a faith that will make martyrs of them—a thousand times more than martyrs—without some ground for it. What was it that these men believed that wrought such miracles in their lives? They believed in Jesus. What was it they believed in Jesus? They believed that he was the Son of God; that he was the Messiah; that he came from heaven and had returned to heaven. Why did they believe this? They believed it because they saw his miracles; because they saw in his manner of life and in his words and in his works that which convinced them; because they saw him die and the portents of that never-to-be-forgotten day; because they saw him after the resurrection; because they saw him enter the cloud. These were the reasons of their faith. Is there any thing strange now in their faith? or can it be ascribed to any thing else? Their faith is proof of the truth of its substance. It was true, then, that Christ was the Son of God. Does not this answer the question why the Gospel succeeded? Its truth so demonstrated is reason enough; and no other reason can be alleged. The after-effect of its successful propagation, and its continuance and augmenting power to this day, and its certain future triumph over all opposition until it shall fill the whole world according to his promise, are precisely the proper and only proper effects of the cause, and

The ground of the faith of early disciples.

effects which could arise from no other cause. The three facts, Christ, his words, his works, are the full and only possible explanation of the successful planting and permanent triumph of Christianity.

The great historian wrestled with this question. Every one who has seriousness enough to undertake to find truth must wrestle with it. It is a crucial question. He did not answer it as we do, directly. There is reason to suppose that he sought to avoid so answering it. But he examined the subject with the utmost learning and carefulness, and his answer is candid. We shall see that the logic of his answer carries to the precise solution we have given, and cannot stop short of it. Let the reader turn to his discussion and read it with care; it is one of the most interesting and important chapters in his wonderful history—the chapter on the rise and spread of the Christian religion.

For the spread of Christianity he assigns five reasons, and each one is elaborated with masterly skill, and I think with the candor of a true historian. The reasons, as he states them, are: "(a) The inflexible and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of the Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrow and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentile from embracing the law of Moses. (b) The doctrine of future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to that important truth. (c) The miraculous power ascribed to the primitive Church. (d) The pure and austere morals of Christians. (e) The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire." *

* See Gibbon's "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," and read the whole discussion.

These are good reasons, and show profound study of the subject. The analysis proves the historian to be, not a mere reciter of annals, but a philosopher as well. We wonder that he did not pursue the analysis further, and explain to us a vital point at which he more than once hinted; that is, the genesis of these five facts which play so important a part in creating the greatest event in all history. We the more wonder that he did not prosecute the inquiry, since he admits another fact which contains the deeper reason which he failed to name. He stoutly affirms, time and again, that the propagators had unflagging faith; they believed what they taught. Now this deeper fact, which is tap-root of all the others in the last analysis, is the true explanation. If we take up his reasons one by one, this cannot fail to discover itself. Take the first reason which he phrases: "The inflexible and, if we may use the expression, the intolerant zeal of Christians, derived, it is true, from the Jewish religion, but purified from the narrowness and unsocial spirit which, instead of inviting, had deterred the Gentiles from embracing the law of Moses." This is a remarkably clear statement, and as true as clear in all its parts. Is it not strange that it did not occur to one of such keen insight to inquire what gave rise to this intolerant zeal; what it was that stripped it of its narrowness and made it so un-Jewish? Webster defines zeal, "Passionate ardor in the pursuit of any thing; eagerness in favor of a person or cause." That is a good definition. It expresses exactly what the historian and philosopher meant. The adjectives are well chosen; it was inexorable, intolerant zeal. Nothing could cool it; it admitted of no compromises; death itself could not extinguish it. It flamed, and burned, and glowed like a furnace in their hearts. Was it not worth while to inquire what inspired such phenomenal zeal? Passionate ardor in the pursuit of any thing, eagerness in favor of a person or cause, do not spring out of nothing,

especially intolerant, inexorable zeal—zeal that carries its possessor to the stake rather than yield an iota. Was it not worth while to inquire what it was that introduced the un-Jewish element of broadness into the zeal of these Jewish minds? Is it not entirely certain that if the historian had pursued that inquiry he would have found this to be the cause—that they profoundly believed in this person and cause, for whom and which they were intolerant of opposition? Had they been void of such a faith would they have felt any such passion? The question answers itself—the zeal grew from this faith.

Is there not, then, still another question for the historian to raise and settle? Must he not find a reason for the faith?

The reason for
the faith.

Faith, as mere idle belief, does not have, it may be, an assignable reason; it may be unconsciously imbibed; it may be volitional; we believe because it is the fashion, because it is less trouble than to doubt, because it falls in with our inclination, because we would like to have it so. That there is a faith of this kind there can be no doubt. Faith of such a genesis implies nothing as to the truth of what is believed. But when belief is a profound conviction of the truth of a proposition, or an unfaltering trust in a person, and, more yet, when it inspires inexorable zeal; and when, yet further, it endures the strain of the greatest trial of sacrifice and suffering, to the renunciation of all things, for a cause; when, beyond all this, it arises from personal knowledge of the things embraced, and does not rest upon mere rational inference, however apparently adequate the ground for the inference, then the faith ceases to be a mere idle acquiescence and acquires real significance; are we not safe in saying it assumes the dignity of proof of that which is believed—becomes evidence?

Take the case of Paul. Is it possible to account for his

faith on any other theory than that he actually saw the vision which he declares occurred on his way to Damascus? In the case of the other apostles is it possible to account for their faith except by ascribing it to what they personally knew of the Lord? The later converts had not, it is true, the same grounds of faith; but can it be doubted that their convictions, resting on the testimony of the real witnesses of the miracles which they constantly recited in their preaching, and on their own experiences, were the source of their inflexible zeal? Thus the only way of accounting for the zeal of the early Christians, which was the proximate cause of the successful propagation of the Gospel, is, that it was inspired by absolute conviction of the real Messiahship of Christ and of the truth of his teachings, which conviction, in turn, was the product of the compulsory proofs he furnished. Christianity was successfully propagated because it was true. The success under the circumstances is proof of its truth.

If we ask why the zeal of the propagandist was purged of Jewish narrowness, which is a part of the ascribed cause, we again meet the same only possible explanation; namely, that it acquired that character because of faith in the Master. They did not lift themselves out of the narrowness of Judaism: they were lifted out by the teachings of the Master. It was faith in him, resting on what they had seen, that opened their minds and widened their hearts to the conception of a universal religion for the now to them new and accepted doctrine of the universal brotherhood of man—the miracle of the discovery that “God was no respecter of persons, but that in every nation [equally] he that feared God and worked righteousness was accepted of him.”

The second reason assigned is: “The doctrine of a future life, improved by every additional circumstance which could

give weight and efficacy to that important truth." Here again is a good statement, and a true one. There can be no reasonable doubt that the doctrine of a future life as taught by Christ and his disciples was a great element of power. But the doctrine itself was not new. Plato had taught it hundreds of years before. Cicero had taught it; it was an ancient doctrine among the Jews themselves. This the historian admits. What then was it, might it not have been useful to inquire, that now gave it its new power? He must have been conscious that this was the real question, for his putting of the case implies it in the words "improved by every additional circumstance which could give weight and efficacy to the important truth." Is it not strange that he did not think it important to inquire and name what these impressive additional circumstances were, and that he did not discover in them, rather than in the doctrine itself, the secret of the power which conquered success? What were these unique circumstances? Were they not these: "Christ taught as one having authority, and not as the scribes;" that is, by him it was put as a matter of knowledge? he revealed the other world, and after having revealed it he demonstrated it by his own resurrection? If before it had been a vague uncertainty, a nimbus of speculation, now it became the most impressive reality. "He brought life and immortality to light," not by declaring it, but by proving it. Thus again it was simple and unwavering faith, created by miracle, that explains the success of the preaching—a faith which, being traced to its source, furnishes the evidence that Christ was a divine teacher; that is, a faith based upon the proofs he gave in the style of his doctrine and in the miracles he wrought that he was a teacher sent of God. Had the philosopher pushed his inquiry to the last analysis he would have found the grounds of success to be the proofs furnished of the supernatural presence with the divine teacher; that it

was God speaking, and not a mere man or men like themselves. The teacher laid bare the eternal world, and they could not withhold faith. There is no other explanation of the power of the idea, and of his power to put the idea, and of the conviction which the idea carried with it, but that he was supernaturally empowered and attested. All turned on the proof furnished, both as to the truth and its efficacy for propagandism. This is precisely what appears in his third reason: "the miraculous power claimed by the Church; that is, by the apostles." Here again is a great truth, but not so well stated as either of the foregoing. If he had said the miraculous power that was and had been evinced by the Founder and his coadjutors, he would have announced the all-embracing reason, and there would have been no occasion to add any further statement. The word "claimed," which he employed, was not only a mistake, but a philosophical blunder. The claim of supernatural power is not an element of strength—it explains nothing; *prima facie*, it is an element of weakness. If the claim be not supported it is a fatal load which no cause can bear. Had Christ claimed miraculous power, and not exhibited it, he would have won no following. He pointed to the proofs, not to the claim. It was the fact of supernatural power displayed in the miracles that carried conviction. If, unwilling to admit the claim, the critic had advanced one step further, and added the word "belief," so that his statement had read, "belief in the miraculous power claimed," his answer would have been the exact truth, but it would have left the question still further back, Why did they believe the claim? And this brings us to the same position already established, that the belief, when we consider its strength, and the circumstances which caused it, demonstrates that the miracles actually took place. On no other theory can the belief be explained. The last result is, that the miracles

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were wrought, and so Christianity was successfully propagated by supernatural attest and agency. There is no escape from the logic of the conclusion.

If now we turn to the fourth reason assigned, namely, "the pure and austere morals of Christians," we have again to say this is a true answer. That the cause assigned is a Gibbon's fourth cause. great and deserved compliment to ancient Christianity cannot be disputed. The justness of the compliment is abundantly acknowledged by their enemies and bitter persecutors. It stands as the marvelous fact of history. They were not simply a band of zealots propagating a ritual or doctrines adverse to those commonly held among the people with whom they grew up, or seeking to create a new guild or sect. The new faith imposed a morality properly styled austere, denouncing and forbidding, on pain of exclusion and of eternal damnation, all sin, and enjoining absolute and uncompromising righteousness toward God and toward man. In itself this, in an age of the world when such austere holiness involved great departure from the common practice and universal habit, it would seem, could hardly be a means of success. Men do not eagerly embrace austere morality. Disciples to self-denial and self-renunciation are not easily won. Men dislike restraint. A doctrine of liberty would have been more popular. Austerity is not a winning card now, and never was, nor in itself could be with man, as history has shown him. And yet there can be no doubt it was one of the great forces, and is to-day, in propagating Christianity. Christianity exists only because it demands holiness. It perishes at once when the demand is let down. An immoral Christianity, as a permanence, is an impossibility; in fact, it is a contradiction. Its mission is to establish righteousness in the earth.

But now, when we come to inquire why it was that the early Christians practiced this austere and rigorous morality, and

how it was that this was a power of propagation, we strike upon some important principles bearing on the question in hand. To the question, How it was, we are compelled to answer : It was because the Founder enjoined austere morals. That he did so is not disputed. There it stands as the conspicuous fact of his teaching. The rigorousness of his requirements places him in the van of all moral teachers. He tolerates no sin in the outward life. He requires absolute purity in the inward motive and intent. His term of discipleship is obedience to the extreme requirement. Any violation excludes from his kingdom, except upon sincere repentance and radical reformation.

There remains then this question : What induced men to accept a discipleship involving such rigors, always and everywhere repugnant to the human heart? That it is not an easy and natural thing to submit to such rigors of law and self-denial of practice all men feel and know. Rigorous morality is never spontaneous. Men do not choose it for pleasure. These early Christians were like other men. When Christianity came to them many of them were vile heathen. All the habits of their life and all the thoughts of their hearts were foul, impure, beastly. What was it that turned them about? Is it possible to believe that it was mere volition? Can a single example be found where such an effect was produced by such a cause? Men act either from habit, or from mere impulse, or from some powerful motive. Their habits were all the other way from rigorous morality ; they were ingrained, had grown with their growth and strengthened with their strength. We know the power of habit when, beginning with infancy, it runs up to manhood ; how it becomes a second nature, and binds us as with fetters of steel, and is next to impossible to be broken ; how, even when the miserable victim writhes under it and would free himself, he cannot. To this power of habit must be added the fact that

Why did the
early Chris-
tians practice
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ity?

their impulses were all the other way. This is a universal law of humanity. The impulses of humanity, explain it as we may, are to evil, to self-indulgence, to lawlessness, to all kinds of immorality. These impulses increase by long-continued indulgence. There is no fact more familiar to us than this. The tendencies are naturally all downward. Now, the question is, Why did these men reverse their habits and impulses, and change about suddenly and radically? The case is not yet stated in all its strength. To long-established habit and ungovernable impulse must be added the force of example, the influence of friendships, the natural hesitancy and shrinking from becoming singular; and still, further and more difficult, must be added, that they not only reversed all their habitual character against all these tendencies and influences that bound them with such absolute power, but they did it in the face of peril and danger; did it with the certain knowledge that in doing it they would incur the forsaking and hatred of all their friends; would become objects of scorn and derision; would become outcasts and be denied the means of a livelihood; yea, would, in all probability, finally, when all means to induce them to return to their old heathen practices failed, be put to death with tortures.

The question to be considered is, How, in the presence of all these facts, is it to be explained that these converts accepted and were able to consistently carry out the austerity of morality which the new religion imposed upon them? That there must have been some tremendous motive must be certain. What was that motive? Is it possible to find any other answer than this: They had faith in the absolute truth of the new religion? This faith supplied the requisite motive power. They believed in Jesus; they believed in the doctrine he taught; they believed in his promised presence to uphold and keep them; they believed that the austerities enjoined would ultimate in eternal

life. With this faith came into them a new life ; they became new creatures ; they were born again ; the old nature of evil habit and impulse passed away, and a new nature was given them. That this is a rational explanation, and the only rational explanation, and the true explanation, we are constrained to believe. Thus again we are led back to the supernatural character of the new religion.

The fifth reason assigned by Gibbon is : “ The union and discipline of the Christian republic, which gradually formed an independent and increasing state in the heart of the Roman empire.” There is no doubt that these early Christians were strongly bound together. It was not possible it should be otherwise. The taint which they assumed separated them from all others, and if they had not been driven asunder from fear and disgust of the infection, their own inclination would have separated them. Their newly acquired principles and tastes would not permit them to keep up their associations with those whose practices were still heathen. Thus repelled by absolute difference from the mass, they constituted a guild held together by the cohesive attraction of a common faith and common sympathies ; persecution added its force to weld them into indissoluble bonds. They were a distinct people, a united people organized into a community among themselves. Whether this was a cause or an effect of the successful establishment and diffusion of the new faith, or both cause and effect, might be a question. But, like as in the case of all the other four reasons, we are driven back to find the cause of the up-growth of this “ *imperium in imperio*.” And, as in each of the former, we shall find the reason in a conviction that Christ was the great Messiah, and we shall find that the faith was the result of proofs which proved that he was the Sent of God. The system never could have prevailed but for these proofs.

We add but one remark upon the point in hand : had Christ been an impostor, or, milder yet, a mere enthusiast, it is impossible that, under the circumstances, Christianity, as it has been from the first and is now, should have been established and developed to its present status in the world ; but, on the other hand, were he a messenger from heaven attested by supernatural proofs, proofs from the prophecies with respect to him, proofs from his personal character and superhuman wisdom, and proofs from the miraculous works which he performed, we have in these facts alone the explanation of the success which attended the planting of the new kingdom. There is no other explanation possible. The success thus becomes proof of the supernatural origin of the system. It has been able to plant, extend, and perpetuate itself because it is divine. Had it been spurious it would long ago have been destroyed. If it had been able to survive the assaults of its enemies it would have perished by the weakness and folly of its friends. Begrimed, imperfectly understood, falsely interpreted, perverted, crucified in the house of its friends, maligned, hated, tormented, criticised, hung upon the gibbet a thousand times by its enemies, it must long ago have gone to oblivion had it not been preserved and protected by the divinity which founded it.

An error may continue to dominate the faith and practices of men long after it has been exposed. The successful propagation of a doctrine or establishment of a fact in the face of severe criticism is a strong proof of their validity.

In summing up and closing this, we remark, as we did at the opening, the spread of Christianity is a fact which must be accounted for. We have given our explanation. Can any other be given? Certain it is, that, had it not been born of God, it must long ago have perished. There has been both enough hostility and enough fatuity to have rooted it out of

the earth. It started under the most inauspicious circumstances. Its Founder was a despised and rejected Galilean Jew, without friends, without power, without personal attractions. The religion he taught was offensive to the tastes and the prejudices and the social welfare of those to whom he preached, requiring of them the renunciation of their most coveted pleasures, and exposing them to the most shameful obloquies. In return he offered them, his immediate followers, no earthly rewards of any kind, but only dishonor, persecution, and violent death. By his denunciation he arrayed against himself the fiercest hatred both of the state and leading sectaries. He was soon regarded a most dreaded public enemy, and king and priest united against him. His death was believed to be essential to the safety of the nation, and yet he had no following, except a small company of obscure and despised disciples. Without show of resistance, or arrangements for safety, he allowed himself to be taken and publicly executed, though had he chosen so to do he could have prevented it. His death was attended with all the circumstances of infamy possible to the greatest criminals. This in all ordinary cases would have been the natural end of what seemed to be a mad scheme of folly and imposture. Many impostors had arisen before, making the same claim which he made. They had been consigned to an early oblivion. No followers were found to perpetuate their names. Why should his case be different? Why, now that he was dead, should we hear any thing more of him? On what principle should he now win a following? Why, when the next morning sun arose upon that cross and sepulcher, did not men and women fall into accustomed ruts of quiet acquiescence in a sad disappointment, and hasten to bury the unpleasant memory? That would have been the natural order. It did not so happen.

At the evening of the memorable day, as the excited multi-

Persecution ineffectual.

tude paried and turned wearily to their homes sated with blood, it looked as if the curtain had dropped and the last scene ended. The next day, as the stillness of despair and glutted rage lulled the air, the waves of oblivion seemed closing fast over the greatest sensation of the ages. The disciples themselves had scattered, only a few remaining with a strange enchantment around the scene. The third morning rose with quieting omens, but suddenly the air became changed. A rumor got afloat that a vision of angels had appeared to the soldiers who were set to guard the sepulcher, and that Christ himself had risen. It circulated wide and fast, and was the tocsin of a new and deeper excitement than before. The scattered and frightened disciples came together again, some reciting to others how they had seen the Lord. Hour by hour new recitals poured new vials of electricity on the surcharged air. Excited crowds gathered to hear the strange reports; multitudes went to the grave and found it empty; the authorities were busy in trying to calm the turbulent crowd; the disciples were bold and defiant. Thousands began openly to declare their espousal of the new faith. The contagion spread each day. The lamb was chasing the lion and running away with the prey. One single fact created the new danger—the report of the resurrection of the Crucified. That, and that alone, set all the elements in wild commotion. What was it that kept the sanguinary authorities at bay? Why could they not stop these mouths? Why did they not bring the ghastly body and exhibit it in the market-place, that the wild frenzy of delusion might cease, and the disquieted multitude have it in their power to contradict the atrocious falsehood? What was needed was plain and easy if the frenzy-engendering story was false; but the one needed thing was not done! Day by day the evil grew and became more unmanageable. The news extended beyond the limits of the nation, and propagated

itself on every side. Emissaries multiplied and converts sprang up in the towns and cities of western Asia, and as far as Rome itself. The world was rapidly falling before the uncontradicted story of a resurrection.

This was the first stage. Taken for all in all, it was the strangest hallucination that ever struck humanity. Then opened the second stage, so full of blood that it makes one dizzy to read its frightful details. A public proclamation is made before the bloody chapter opens; men are reproved and forbidden to speak any more in the hated name. The inhibition is publicly defied. The offenders are seized, flagellated, and imprisoned. Fuel is added to the flame by reports of miraculous deliverances by angels. The gibbet is erected in every town. All the chief offenders in quick succession are executed. Of the twelve apostles only one escapes from the most tragical death, and he by miracle. Others spring into their places, and follow them to the fagot or the cross. The executioner with his power enters every hamlet and home, and drags not men alone, but even women and children to the stake, until the monsters themselves weary of blood. But the persecution accomplishes nothing—for each victim come ten candidates for the glory of a martyr's crown. Despite all possible measures of repression the Nazarene triumphed! When three hundred years had sped, a cross, at first a badge of shame, was made the proud symbol that led the conquering legions! An altar to the Crucified was built in the senate house! It was impossible to put down the new faith! How can this be explained?

After ages of persecution a new era dawned—an era of prosperity. Will prosperity accomplish the ruin which adversity defied? It will be little short of a miracle if it do not. Triumphant, and leading the state, a new and more dangerous adversary struck it; it became itself corrupt and bloody; its

temples were soon filled with pagan orgies; its spirit was rapidly narcotized in the embrace of political power and heathen ceremonies. Forgetting its origin, it denied Prosperity corrupted, but did not destroy it. the Crucified and put a paganish priesthood in his place. Degenerated from the purity of its morals, it committed crimes and perpetrated follies enough in the name of its dead Founder to have consigned it to eternal infamy. Unmindful of the simplicity of his teachings and example, it overlaid the story of his life and the mystery of his words with fables enough to make it an eternal nausea and derision. Assuming its state part, it dressed itself in cap and bells to go down the highway of history the laughing-stock of wits and buffoons; ceasing to respect character, knaves stole its livery and ministered at its holy altars, and its vestments stank with the foulest crimes. Drifting from its inspired code, it substituted for doctrine not simply fables but dogmas more hateful than the silliest legends; doctrines which converted its God into a devil, and made its hell more desirable than its heaven. Forsaking its divine allegiance, it became the patron and panderer of power against weakness, of despotism against liberty: a foe to man and an enemy to God: a blotch, a gangrene! But it survived even all this. It was a compound leprosy which it would some day slough off, and it was not therefore permitted to die. That day came, but not until after weary ages of suffering and crime had well-nigh worn out humanity, and turned the globe into a lazaret-house of helpless misery. The nerves shiver as we look back into that awful past!

Once more the light struggled through the fetid darkness, and the Christ of Galilee and Calvary came walking amid the gloom to the sinking ship of human hopes! The Reformation burst upon the world at an unexpected moment and from an unexpected quarter. The rescue was

scarcely less wonderful than the primary giving of the Gospel. From its own bosom, debased into a mass of corruption and priestly fables, issued again the ancient light. It could come from no other source. But, like a ravenous beast, it turned with more than pagan venom to devour its own flesh. Again the venerated Gospel went to the stake and dungeon, and re-fought its old battles, and re-asserted its ancient power. The contest was not less sanguinary nor less demoniacal than its early conflicts. The priests that ministered at its desecrated altars were more fecund of inventions to strangle it than its old pagan enemies had been. Nero was surpassed by popes and bishops within its corrupt household. Thus, never permitted to be at rest, except when apostate, it fought its way from the cross on which its Founder died until it conquered. Kings have fought against it with mighty armies; priests have conspired to corrupt and deform it with follies and lies; unbelievers have combined to impale it on the gibbets of logic and ridicule; knaves have arrayed it in mock robes of state pomp to render it the sport of buffoons and scoffers; its own friends and foes have in turn made it a jest by their weaknesses and a spectacle of horror in its adversities. The struggle has extended through centuries, and spread over the fairest provinces of the earth. Many times, from Nero and Julian till now, it has been proclaimed dead—extirpated—but it still lives. The "*bruta fulmina*" and coarse persecutions of its pagan adversaries and domestic betrayers have been followed by the more deadly assaults of skilled skepticism and scientific and philosophical criticism. Every possible resource of pen and brain has been laid under tribute. To the bitterness of Celsus and Porphyry has been added the subtlety of Hume, the venom of Voltaire, the vulgar ribaldry of Paine, the cold dissection of Strauss, the ingenious dialectic of Baur, the flashing rhetoric of Renan, and the eager hostility of a nameless host of self-styled rationalizers, each contributing to his

utmost of wit and wisdom and spleen for its overthrow. All antiquity has been ransacked, all history raveled, all science subsidized, all quibbles invented, all hate invoked, all sophistries resorted to, all evil passions summoned, to give deadliness to the aim. No new ally can ever be brought upon the field; no new cast or combination can ever be devised that can add virulence to the poisoned chalice. What have we as the result? Christianity still lives! Not that alone; it is more vital to-day than at any time in its past history!

Can this be accounted for? Let the reader ask himself in all candor, putting aside prejudice and taking the case as he finds it. Could a religion founded by a despised Jew, Despite all opposition triumphant. himself without friends, without means, without learning, supported only by a few uncultured men from the crudest callings of coarse labor, and from the humblest ranks of life; arrayed against the combined power of public opinion, the force of intense religious prejudice, the active hostility of throne and altar; its converts hunted to death; its Founder himself publicly and ignominiously executed; a religion whose doctrines are mysteries, whose requirements are onerous, offering no temporal rewards, and overloaded with all manner of temporal hardships; a religion which seemed to be an apostasy from the religion of the most venerated ancestors; a religion threatening all liars and deceivers with the direst punishments after death, and, if false, impossible to secure any immunities—could such a religion, founded in fraud, itself a compound of frauds, offering nothing to the mind but useless and senseless lies, nothing to the affections but deceit and dishonor, nothing to the life but suffering and poverty, nothing to the soul but sin and shame—could such a religion find a following? Could it make converts by the thousand in the very place and among the very people who knew it to be a mass of fables? Could it inspire

men and women and children to renounce home and kindred and the deepest loves of life, and life itself, in its support? Could it maintain itself through hundreds of years of bloody struggle, and at last, wearing out all its enemies, and putting to the rout all other religions, however founded and however revered, get possession of the world, conquering its enemies in detail, winning the admiration of the wisest and best men, and absolutely making its lie the fountain of the highest and most beneficent civilization, not only that has existed, but that is possible, if its precepts were fully observed and obeyed by men? Is the thing possible?

It is only saying what no one can dispute when we assert that Christianity is to-day the greatest power on earth and the most beneficent. The thrones of the whole world have not power to overthrow it—the world Christianity now the greatest power on earth. itself cannot reject or destroy it. Like the sun, it shines without asking permission, and human power is no less impotent to the blotting out of the one than unequal to the eradication of the other. The boundaries of empires will change; despotic thrones will chase each other to oblivion; new policies and potentates will rise upon the ruins of the old; names at which the world trembles, and altars at which it offers incense, will become unknown and crumble into nothing; but Christianity, surviving all and becoming more and more lustrous, must continue to lead on and lead out advancing civilizations, becoming itself not only the dominant but the one only power under heaven in whose name kings shall rule, and for the furtherance of whose ends policies shall prevail. Meantime the pygmy critics, who roar themselves hoarse in shouting each other's hosannas and in predicting its downfall, having lived their brief day will pass over to join their predecessors whose inventions are forgotten, or only remembered to point a joke or adorn a conundrum. Never-

theless, they do serve a purpose. They help to strike the barnacles from the sides of truth and tear the clouds from its face, and so to make way for its clearer shining and the more complete and graceful exhibition of its form; but they do not, as they suppose and as many believers seem to imagine, put in peril either its existence or its certain triumph.

It is impossible to explain how the system has gained its place of power, and how it continues to hold it, on any other theory than that of its substantial truth. The attempts at explanation on the theory of imposture at once and triumphantly express the weakness of that position. That this fact itself constitutes a strong proof is patent to any candid mind. The case stands precisely as it should stand, allowing the system to be what it claims. It stands precisely as it is impossible it should stand if it were a fraud.

ARGUMENT FROM ITS ADAPTATION TO HUMAN NEEDS.

THERE can be no doubt that a religion revealed from heaven would not only be purged of all error and contain only truth, but further, that it would more especially distinguish itself from all false religions by containing such truths as would completely meet the deeper wants of man. Free from fables and silly superstitions, such as in all ages have marked man-made religions, it would employ itself in the unfolding of those deep and great mysteries which invest the divine character, and those profound practical principles which tend to the elevation and purification of humanity. Taking, too, on itself the perfection of its source, and leaving no place for modification or improvement, it would be a system of complete truth which would adapt it to all possible stages of the progress and development of knowledge which would spring from it; thus forever completely meeting all the wants of man in his entire nature, and in all the stages of his advancement, but especially and directly those wants which arise from his spiritual nature, and which characterize him as a religious being. There is no reason to suppose that it would employ itself about matters of temporal and secular knowledge directly, further than to inculcate principles and precepts touching the ordering of his life which would guide him to the discovery and application of such truths as would work to his greatest temporal well-being. It would not be a thesaurus of science, but it would develop man so that he would find out science. It would not prescribe social order, nor define and adjust policies of government, but

Christianity
must meet hu-
man need.

it would prescribe rules the observance of which would, under all the varying circumstances of the race, lead to the attainment of these. It would mother the highest and best civilization. Out of it would come thrift, industry, frugality, temperance, brotherly kindness, love of the best things, and those habits of the mind and practices of the life—its direct fruit—which would lead to the creation of social and civil institutions of the most beneficent tendencies, to the broadest and deepest learnings, to the greatest development and most beneficent use of wealth, to the realization of the largest and most universal good of humanity. On its stem would grow the deepest philosophy, the most perfect science, the broadest and purest culture. No growth of knowledge outside of its special revelations ever would either contradict it or collide with its requirements, but would be in harmonious accord and unison with it. The world would not outgrow it, but would forever continue to grow out of it and grow into it; each advance would meet it, none would cross it; it would still lead, and forever be in the advance; the highest consummations would find it the parent fountain, and it would still be the crown and glory of all. These are the demands which we are sure must be made on a divine religion. The meeting of these requirements would prove the system to be divine. This we claim Christianity does, and in so doing shows itself to be a God-descended religion.

It is due to this argument to recur to what was stated in the opening section of this treatise in defining Christianity. It was there stated that Christianity was the religion taught by Christ and specifically contained in the New Testament, and not that which is contained in any human creeds or interpretations—any form of ecclesiasticism. These, while in some cases they more or less adequately express the system, have never been free from errors, and in some cases have been

fraught with injurious and dangerous abuses. The ages have modified and corrected them, and will continue to do so. The purification comes from Christianity itself, and is in no case a correction or modification of it, but in all cases simply the better understanding of it. Progress of knowledge has brought it about, and the same cause may continue to bring about like results in the future; and whatever will aid to that will serve to show that a right understanding of the doctrine taught by Christ is all that is necessary to adapt it to and make it helpful of all advance yet to be made. From within itself has come, and will come, either directly or indirectly, the deeper insight. But while it is to be admitted that doctrines have been taught, which were believed by the most eminent Christians, which have proved on better understanding to be false, and while there have been evils in ecclesiasticism which larger knowledge has corrected or is seeking to correct, and will correct, still it has been true that, despite these and under these, the system has been beneficent—the best thing as a corrective, and the most powerful agent in the purification of its own abuses.

As an intellectual being man wants truth for the mind; Christianity inspires him to seek it; it sets no limit to his pursuit of it; it always exalts it; it never collides with it; where it lies beyond possible attainment by his unaided faculties it reveals it; what lies beyond sense and is undiscoverable to philosophy it opens to faith and attests by miracle. There is no truth necessary to man that it does not bring within his reach. Man is a moral and religious being. It is no less true that he has intellectual and physical wants than it is that he has moral and religious ones. His moral and religious nature is as real as his intellectual and physical—may we not say deeper and more fundamental? The truths which lie in this direction are more obscure and occult.

Christianity
meets intellec-
tual needs.

Christianity supplies what nature cannot give. On all moral questions it furnishes law for the conscience. On all spiritual and religious questions it furnishes light for the reason. The Bible meets this demand. It cannot, as, indeed, no power can—not even omnipotence—elevate and transform men into saints without or against their consent. It must deal with them as free beings. It must recognize and work under the eternal and unchangeable law of the absolute independence of the individual will. It cannot force the end which Man a free being. it seeks. It may be fatally hindered and obstructed, and the race may, despite it, go on to deeper and yet deeper ruin of sin; but it must be—and is—the best adapted instrument possible, and furnish proofs in individual cases of its saving power. Failure ought not to be attributable to its inadequacy.

It has not been a dead-letter. It has not left the race as it found it. It is certain that no greater power ever entered this world. It has turned and overturned; it has grappled with and overthrown hoary superstitions; it has eradicated huge and monstrous evils; it has ennobled manhood; it has elevated womanhood; it has weakened and discomfited oppression; it has melted the chains of slavery; it has given sacredness to human life; it has imparted sanctity to marriage; it has created the idea of a home; it has begotten the feeling of human brotherhood; it has elevated the aims and pursuits of men; it has diffused education and culture; it has developed a benign and humane civilization; it has elaborated at its church altars, and by its sabbath sermons and sacred services of worship, the noblest and purest and broadest and deepest and grandest types of human excellence that have ever appeared upon the earth. One needs only to contrast Christian with non-Christian States to discover the benignity of its influence. It has visited no nation to whom it did not bring blessings; it has gone into no home to which it did not give peace and well-

being ; it has visited no heart into which it did not introduce healing. Its course may be traced over the ages by the light which shines from its altars and the glory which surrounds its temples. No man can point to one of its teachings or requirements or influences that has harmed human welfare or diminished individual worth or well-being. Were it accepted universally in its true spirit and practice, according to its divine teaching, it would diffuse happiness over the whole world ; it would make an end of war, oppression, domestic strifes, the vices which degrade and destroy the souls and bodies of men ; it would give to all lands a sabbath, to every child a church and school ; to the sick and poor tender ministries of love : it would abolish prisons and sinks of infamy and practices of shame and wickedness ; it would develop industry and thrift, and awake aspirations that would secure the loftiest products of art, the highest forms of culture, the most profitable commerce regulated by equity, industry rewarded by justice, intelligence directed by benevolence ; it would soon make the desert wastes of heathenism bloom, and the abject and miserable abodes of ignorance and superstition radiant with the light of life. For this it was given of God, and to this end it unwearyingly works. No man who knows any thing about it can question this statement. Its adaptiveness to man's wants and necessities is perfect—perfect for ever and for all. It is not a revelation for one nation or one class or one age, but for all men and for all time. It has instruction for the most ignorant which is level to their condition and exactly meets their need. It speaks the right word to the most vicious and hopeless ; it comes to the lowly and humble with the message suited to their state. It lifts up the poor and neglected. It has wisdom for the learned, going beyond their deepest research, and teaching more than all their teachers. As they advance it is always before them, to guide their

Meets moral needs.

Adapted to all grades.

processes and give authority to all their right conclusions. No mind above irresponsibility can be below its helpfulness, and no mind, however gifted and cultured, can be above its service. It is universal in its adaptation—absolutely so. No moral, intellectual, social, physical, or political conditions can exist in which it will not be found a useful and needed helper. It is no respecter of persons. Its law recognizes no exceptions—makes no distinctions. Its privileges are not partial. It is for *man*—of every clime, and every condition. Before it all souls are equal, whatever may be their external differences or actual differences. What it seeks to do for one it seeks to do for all, and what it can do for one it can do for all.

This, in sum, is what a divine religion ought to do for man—ought to help him along all the lines of his manifold interests, but especially ought to bring him help on the great and profound problems as to God and immortality, and the transcendent questions of duty and responsibility which so profoundly agitate him from the dawn of consciousness until the light of life flickers in the socket and goes out in the darkness of death; ought to come to him a helpful power as he struggles with misdirecting appetite and enthralling passion; as he quakes and trembles under the sting of guilt and remorse; ought to be able to bring him deliverance from the thralldom of fear and despair; ought to be a power of regeneration and salvation.

These are results which man, left to himself, has always been and is now utterly unable to work out for himself; which no philosophy or science or superstition or religion has ever achieved. The history of all the ages demonstrates man's inability to provide for the most profound wants of his being. Every man who comes to any proper knowledge of any thing, who thinks at all, and who has any seriousness of mind, knows these things. Look where he will he is enveloped

Man not able to
help himself.

in darkness. Go to whom he may the darkness remains unrelieved. All the temples of heathenism are dumb. All the shrines of philosophy are silent. For bread, as to these higher knowledges, all human science gives only stones.

Christianity comes to man in the circling gloom arrayed in garments of light. There is no profound questioning of his soul that she does not answer. She takes him by the hand and lifts him out of the pit. She places him on his feet, and guides him to the summit of all blessedness if he will follow her. There is no want of his that she does not supply if he will obey her precepts and submit himself to her dictates. Could there be greater proof of her divinity?

The proof of its necessity as a means of human elevation, or as means to meet human need, must appear more clearly still if we reflect for a moment on the effect that would immediately follow if it were suddenly removed from the earth, or if we could picture to ourselves the condition of the world had it never been given. We know what the world was without it—what it is now in lands which its light has not reached. Is there any man who would dare to wish to restore that dreary past, or who would exchange the present of Christendom, imperfectly as it represents what Christianity would make it if it existed in its purity and perfection, for the best thing attained either in the present or past outside of its pale? Suppose we could retain all the best results of progress in Christian lands that have emanated from it: our highest learnings; our scientific attainments; our social refinement; our codes of law; our institutions, eleemosynary, educational, and civil; our arts and letters; our economies of trade and commerce; all the appliances and influences aiding to progress; our great men and mighty leaders of thought; the boom and rush of enterprise; our wealth and luxuries; every thing—but blot out Christianity pure and simple—that which comes to us through revelation—our Bible,

purely Christian ideas and institutions, the Christian idea of God, the name and teachings of Jesus Christ, the Church and Sabbath, the hymns and prayers of the sanctuary, the hope of immortality, the idea of future accountability, every thing that is Christian : would the obliteration be a loss or a gain ? Do we not know that the calamity would be infinite ? that it would be the removal of the foundations ? that it would leave man without hope ? that it would be the precursor of chaos ? Yet that is what would be if Christianity is a fable. The existing proof therefore is, that Christianity is man's greatest need, and, by so far, that it is the most precious boon of the Infinite Father to his human children.

ARGUMENT FROM EXPERIENCE.

WE name as our last argument the testimony of experience. Christianity submits its claim to this test. Christ himself rested his entire claim upon it. He thus brings it Proof open to all. within the power not merely of a select number of experts, or persons of peculiar endowments or exceptional attainments, to ascertain by some difficult or hard process the truth of his claim, but he offers a plain and simple test within the reach of every man. There is no obscurity in the proposition, and nothing occult in the application of the test. He said: "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Take my yoke upon you, for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God."

Experimental evidence is of three kinds: first, the inward consciousness of the truth of what Christ taught; second, the personal experience of the truth in the realization of the thing promised when the conditions have been complied with; third, the witness of the Spirit given to believers.

There are truths which carry their own light with them. In their highest form these are called intuitions—direct cognitions. With respect to such the mind has immediate and irresistible consciousness of them, that is, Truths which carry their own light. absolute experience; truths so known become *de facto* experience in the sense that a sensation is an experience. Many of the doctrines of Christ are of this category; we intuitively

know them to be true. They are no sooner announced than our consciousness responds to them.

There are other truths that come to verification in consciousness by a process, or by practical experiment; such are more commonly called truths of experience; that is, we Truths verified by experience. prove them by applying experimental tests and by realizing promised results. Such are truths of the following and similar kind. Christ promises to realize in us certain experiences if we will comply with certain conditions. It is the common law of experimental science. When we find at the end of an experiment a result, we demonstrate in experience a truth. Henceforth we know it to be a truth because we have made it matter of experience, not because of any external testimony to it. Such is precisely the test which Christ proposes; if we will do certain things we shall come to certain knowledges; if we come to him we shall find rest; if we do his will we shall know of the doctrine; if we believe, we shall be saved; old things will pass away, and all things will become new; we will become new creatures; a new life will come to us, and will evidence itself in our consciousness, and in the total change of our whole character, external and internal: for sorrow we will have joy; for a sense of guilt we will receive a sense of pardon; for a love of sin we will have given to us a hungering and thirsting after righteousness; from feeling that we are aliens and strangers we shall come to know that we are the children of God—the Abba Father will be put upon our tongues and in our hearts.

There are truths which are made known to us by testimony. God thus makes himself known in nature. These do not arise in us as experiences, but as perceptions. If God Testimonial truths. should reveal himself to us directly in our consciousness as a pardoning God, we should then say that we knew by experience—we felt it, realized it, knew it of personal experience.

Now all these forms of experience are vouchsafed to the believer, and they are matters of direct personal consciousness. He comes to know that Christ is his Saviour; that he is the Sent of God; that he is all that he declares himself to be. God sets his seal in human consciousness to these great truths.

If Christianity be, as it claims to be, a supernatural religion—that is, a religion not made by man but given of God—it ought to be possible in some way to make that fact matter of experimental knowledge, and not of mere inference. It stands not simply as an abstract theory, but a practical working power. It is given as an agency to restore the broken relations between God and the human soul; to bring back man to God; to establish the kingdom of righteousness in the heart; to radically renovate character; to transform individual souls from the love and practice of sin to the love and practice of holiness. Now these are experimental results. The experience attests the truth of the system. If the system were false no such experiences would be realized.

Does Christianity bear its self-chosen and self-asserted test? Does it do what it declares it was intended it should do, and what it declares it will do, and upon the fulfillment of which it stakes its claim? If it does so do it establishes its claim. If it fails to meet its engagement it discredits its promises and annuls its claim. The test is plain and simple, and is at hand—nothing could be fairer.

Before we enter upon the question as to whether it meets the test, we call attention to the fact that the experimental results on which it stakes its claim are results which cannot be reached in any other way than that which it provides. No other system can adduce them. There are no doctrines or prescriptions on earth, or ever have been, which work out such phenomena of experience as Christianity stakes its veracity upon. They are not in the power

Results of experience only
realizable by
experience.

of any science, or philosophy, or other religion. The test is definitive results from obedience to prescribed rules. The rules are simple, easily understood, without expense, in the power of every person for himself, and such as are honorable and commendable in themselves. The assurance is, that compliance with them will renovate the entire character, and work out in the experience the greatest amount of happiness and peace.

Are there any witnesses who have made the experiment? What is their testimony?

To the question, Are there any witnesses who have had the experience referred to? we answer unhesitatingly, Yes. They are not few in number; they are not such only as Are there witnesses of experiences. have lived in some remote time or place; they are not obscure or unknown persons. They may be counted by hundreds of millions; they form an unbroken chain from the days of Christ to this day; among them is the glorious company of martyrs who sealed their testimony with their blood. Some of these witnesses are to-day our neighbors and kinsmen, and count by millions at the present time. There is no reader of this statement that has not personally known many of them. There is no community in the civilized world where it would be difficult to find one or many of them.

What are they? The best people you have ever known. If you search for them you will not find them in prisons or among Who are the witnesses? the criminal classes, except it be on missions of mercy; nor among the profane in gambling dens, or brothels, or drinking-saloons, or where the base and evil-minded congregate. When you look upon them you will not see the bloated cheek, and hardened countenance, and bleared eye of dissipation and debauchery, or the averted face of conscious guilt. You will find them in the homes of purity, in the pursuits of honor, at the altars of religion. They were not all always so. Many of them have been redeemed from the

former practices and companionships of sin. Many of them are of a long line of honorable ancestry. They comprise men, women, and youth. They are of all professions. They come from all walks of life. They are characteristically the best-informed and most reliably intelligent. The princes of intellect and high-toned morality are found in their ranks. These things are matters of universal and confessed knowledge. If a man of exceptional purity and conscientiousness is not a Christian it excites surprise and wonderment. There are some enthusiasts and occasional fanatics, and no doubt a sprinkle of hypocrites; but the exceptions prove the rule. These people are not strangers to you. When you want assured probity it makes assurance doubly sure if you find among the tested elements of character the additional one of profound religious faith.

These ought to be good witnesses when they testify of that which they know of personal experience. Their testimony on any other subject would be conclusive in any court. When they testify on this subject their lives cor- The witnesses not deluded. roborate the testimony; in fact, they need not utter a word. By their fruits we know them. Are they deceived? Is the matter about which they testify a matter about which they are likely to be deceived? It is a question, not of reasoning or inference, but purely a matter of personal experience: can we discredit them on this? Not unfrequently we knew them prior to this experience; we would have believed them then. Have they become less reliable? Some of them were bad men; we knew them as blasphemers, as profane, as wicked and dangerous men, drunkards, dissolute, abandoned; they have become most exemplary. These are matters of knowledge. They recite the story of their conversion with beaming faces and streaming eyes. All tell the same story. Their greatest testimony is most frequently in their last moments.

We allege this as one of the proofs of the truth of Christianity. The proof is in two parts, one of which all observers witness: (a) the change of character which has come on these witnesses; (b) the account they give of its cause and of its accompanying consciousness. Were Christianity not true it is impossible that it could array itself with such attests. The rule is as true of systems as it is of persons: "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Where, if we were searching, would we go to find the best examples of virtue, the highest purity, the noblest worth, the most unbending integrity, the best specimens of humanity? Would we not first go to Christian nations? Would we not pass by, in Christian nations, all unbelievers, and select out of the mass those who have a general respect for Christ and his religion? Pressing still on for the pure gold, would we not select those who know most of Christ and who surrender themselves most completely to him?

Does it signify nothing that these things are so? To the questions, How does it happen that Christians are better than heathen? and, How does it happen that among those who are of Christian birth those who are *de facto* Christians rise in quality of virtue above those who are not, what answer can we give? Is not their superior virtue directly traceable to their faith? Is it not a fact that in precise ratio as they live according to the example and teachings of Christ they become more pure and holy? Do they not themselves invariably ascribe all that is good in them to a grace wrought in them of faith; and all the remaining evil in them to their failure to be what their divine Lord requires of them? When a professing Christian is like other men—no better—do not all men denounce him as a fraud? Why? Is there not in the reproach proof that all men acknowledge the purity of the Christian faith? There is, then, this visible proof that Chris-

Character of
the witnesses.

Why Chris-
tians are better
than heathen.

tianity is elevating: that it does inspire virtue in men. It does not depend on their testimony of word; their lives prove it. By observation it becomes matter of experience with unbelievers themselves that Christians are better than others, and that when they are not they are not worthy to be called by the Christian name. Does this signify nothing? It cannot be pretended that it is explained by the fact that it so happens that only the naturally good become Christians, or that they were virtuous before they became Christians. They know, and all observers know, that this is not true. The open history of all time since Christianity appeared among men up to the facts under the observation of the living generation shows that Christians do not become such because of their superior natural virtue, for, on the contrary, many of them "were plucked as brands from the burning," and many of those who became most eminent saints were chiefest of sinners; thus it must be admitted that the result was the outcome of marvelous conversion. This is matter of universal knowledge, not from hearsay, but from personal observation.

These Christians declare, living and dying, that they know by experience that Christ has power on earth to forgive sin; that they have in themselves the witness that he can change the human heart; that in their individual lives the great change has been effected. They assert What Christians testify. that this experience has come to them on their sincere attempt to do the will of Christ and on their exercise of faith in him. Is there any reason to believe that they mean to be false witnesses? When you remember who they are, no candid man can pretend that. They are not the kind of people that go about lying for nothing. People do not become what these people are by being hypocrites. Whatever may be the fact, they think they are telling the truth.

Can their testimony be ascribed to delusion? What is the

delusion? They declare that they were filled with a sense of guilt; that they, in fact, had been willful sinners; ^{Could this be delusion?} that their hearts were harrowed with remorse and grief; that they could find no rest; that in this condition they came to Christ; that after a struggle of prayer and penitence there came to them, first, trust in Christ, then peace, then a permanent love for righteousness and hatred of sin; that since entering into this new life all things are changed; that now they have conscious peace with God through Jesus Christ. That they have experienced this change, they assert, is matter of knowledge. Could they possibly be deluded as to the matter of fact? It is a case of feeling. Can men be deluded as to whether they have a feeling or not? No one can pretend this. It must be, then, that the delusion is as to the cause of the change which they have experienced. That is the only possible chance for delusion. But consider the probability of delusion in that respect. Is it in the nature of a wholly groundless and utterly false faith to produce such fruits? The false doctrine embraced must be accounted for. Whence did it arise? We know that, in fact, it is traceable directly to the Founder of the system. We have seen his immaculate character. Can we reconcile that character with the belief that he knowingly propagated a lie? Any attempt to explain Christian experience on the theory of delusion breaks down at every point. No more can the profession be explained on the theory of deception. The great fact stands, however explained, that faith in Christ as a divine Teacher and Redeemer works the most marvelous transformations of character, turns the whole current of human pursuits and practices, and transforms the worst of men into the best of men. The fact establishes the doctrine.

We have said nothing of the Christian consciousness except as to a transformed feeling. There is a deeper fact. It is that of spiritual discernment. Thousands, millions of the most

saintly Christians, living and dead, have claimed to possess an absolute knowledge of Christ by inward revelation. They not only are conscious of the transforming power within them imparting to them a new life, but they profess personal communion with God. The Spirit witnesses in them. They know the things whereof they speak. No power can dissuade them of this. How is this to be explained? If true, it verifies faith.

Is it an answer to all this matter of Christian consciousness, that comes to them all in a greater or less degree when they do the will of Christ as it is revealed in his word, to say that it is a delusion or a deceit? Is it an answer when those who have never made the experiment declare that they have no such experience, that they do not believe it? The external proofs they cannot deny. Can they give any rational account of them? We close this argument with the statement that Christian consciousness, flowering and fruiting in Christian life, is a monumental proof of the divinity of Christianity which no sophistry can evade and which no logic can refute.

That the unquestionable characteristics which we have named in the foregoing discussions are the fitting characteristics of a revelation, and that they do cohere in the Bible, cannot be successfully controverted. That, *alone*, they constitute some degree of proof that the Bible is divine must be admitted. Must be admitted for the reason that no human book has ever yet attained such completeness and perfection. There is no principle on which the fact can be accounted for except that a superhuman intelligence pervades it. It has what no earthly mind that has yet appeared could give it, even after all the appliances that ages have produced, itself included.

OPPOSING FACTS.

WE have furnished, as we believe, incontrovertible proof of the proposition that Christianity is a divine and supernaturally attested system of religion. But there are those who profess to doubt. They do not undertake to refute the proofs, but they allege difficulties. These ought to be stated and examined. If the difficulties are real there is an excuse for doubt; if they can be overcome they ought to be removed; or if they are such that in the nature of the case they cannot be removed, but that they do not at all affect the argument, that ought to be made to appear.

Before we enter upon this branch of our work there are two things we ask attention to: First, to the fact that the difficulties are not, so far as we can find, with the proof itself. It is not that the proof is unsuitable, nor that it is inadequate. Neither of these things can be pretended. The proof is precisely the kind which the subject will admit of, and it is not wanting in any element of either positive or circumstantial strength. It is complete and it is conclusive. Nothing conceivable would add to its force. The difficulties which militate against the conclusion established by the proof are of two kinds: (*a*) such as arise from the intrinsic obscurity and difficulty of the subject itself, and (*b*) such as arise from the moral condition of the objector. They are difficulties which do not bear, as counter proof, against the conclusion, and which do not at all impair the worth of the proof produced, but simply awaken objections and opposition on various grounds. Second, difficulties which spring from the state of the objectors themselves. It will be found that as the objections spring from

two different sources, as already alleged, so the objectors divide themselves into two, perhaps three, parts or classes.

The first class—embracing nearly all—is composed chiefly of extremely vicious, debased, and ignorant people, who find the source of their rejection in their own moral condition : the hinderances are all in their ignorance and viciousness ; they simply reject, but assign no reason. Their unbelief has no significance for thought. This fact is not without Compare the witnesses and rejecters. essential value. Place the two great classes (believers and unbelievers) of this description in contrast ; is there not an argument in the contrast ? The one is composed of the good and thoughtful, and of those who have sought to know the truth, and who have an experience of the truth, and who have been lifted into spiritual power of discernment by obedience to the requirements of truth and by the Spirit that giveth help and quickening to the sincere truth-seeker. The other is composed of those who have despised the truth, and whose power of perception has been deadened by following the leadings of their debased appetites and passions. Can a blind man perceive color ? Can one who closes his eyes see even the sun ? If such should assert that there is no color, or that they do not believe there is a sun, would it impair the proof that there are both colors and sun ? Would their stubborn and persistent incredulity be of any value whatever in determining the question ? Does the unbelief of the class above described weigh any thing against the doctrine they discard ? But there is a second class of doubters who are neither vicious nor ignorant. They are both intelligent and, in some cases, of high moral tone. They are not insignificant for number or character. They are found in every considerable Christian community. As a rule, they are not blatant of their doubts. Many of them sincerely deplore their want of faith. But of this class, respectable as it is, is it not safe to say that few have ever given that serious

attention to the subject which its importance demands? They have found difficulties and have not been at the pains to have them removed by careful examination; and finally, on the strength of the, to them, real difficulties, have given themselves up to settled unbelief. When did they ever go patiently and thoroughly through the study of Christian evidences? When did they humbly and sincerely seek help from God? When did they, with persevering effort, apply the experimental test? What weight, in the absence of all this, is their doubt entitled to as against Christianity? What are the difficulties which they have encountered which have turned them into enemies and rejecters of Christ? They cannot point out weakness in the evidences which support his claim. They do not undertake any thing of the kind. If they are candid, and have been at the pains to inform themselves on the subject in any degree, they must acknowledge that the argument seems to be complete and unassailable. They are not able to adduce any comparable counter-proof. The weight of the evidence is all one way. Where, then, is the ground for doubt?

There seem to be several assignable causes for their position as they represent themselves to earnest men, none of which affect the question itself, but which combine to fatally affect them. These are: (*a*) that disinclination to faith which is common to all minds, either because the faith is reproofing or because it makes demands upon the life to which they are unwilling to submit; or, (*b*) pride of difference from common ways of thinking, affectation of deeper learning, and desire to be thought superior to the common mass, or ambition to be numbered with a self-adulating guild of self-styled independent thinkers; or, (*c*) imaginary difficulties which have been started in their minds by the prevailing skepticism they find in books and floating in the circle in which they move, which they have not the earnestness to examine; or, (*d*) sheer volitional skepticism, abandon-

ment of themselves to unbelief, on the assumed ground that there is no possibility of knowing the truth, and that, on the whole, one thing is about as good as another, since it is impossible to come at certainty of knowledge. The general conclusion reached is: Let every man think for himself, and it matters little what they think so that they are satisfied and live peaceable and well-ordered lives. The parties of this class are like a ship on tropical seas which has tackling and rigging for sailing and a provision for propulsion by steam, but, as sailing is less expensive and requires less labor than steaming, the master of the craft chooses to sail. It has happened that he has struck a doldrum and his vessel makes no headway, but he has lost his reckoning, or is too indolent to look it up, and not knowing which way to direct his course, and unwilling to do the labor of firing up till he can pass out of the becalmed sea, he gives himself to the lullaby of the sea and consents to rot upon the ocean. He might make his reckoning if he would try; he has the means at hand, if he were so disposed, to push himself out of the doldrum; but, on the whole, he prefers the dreaminess and deliciousness of the equatorial sea, and remains in luxurious repose, comforting himself meantime with the idle dream that there is no port; or if, perchance, there should be one, nobody knows in what direction it lies, and he is as likely to reach it in this way as any other; and if he should fail he is not to blame, since he had no adequate chart to guide him. A chart is offered him. It is recommended as accurate by those who have carefully examined it. Thousands declare they have sailed by it and found the port. There is no known flaw in it. But it will require him to tack about. He must re-set his sails or fire up the engine. This he is disinclined to do. So far as he has knowledge, those who have directed their course by the chart and the approved methods of reckoning have avoided shoals and hid-

den reefs and other perils, and reached safe anchorage; and those who have refused it have invariably made shipwreck. But he has heard objections to some of its details and some of the processes used in making it; and then, it is a chart which common sailors can use; on the whole, there are things about it he cannot quite see the propriety of—it goes north without reason, and south when there is no need. Those who go by it are narrow and bigoted, have no freedom or broadness of mind, are slaves to traditions; the age has outgrown it, it belongs to a defunct period; science has changed all the old ideas; every free, broad-minded navigator must cut loose from the dead past of prescription suited to infancy, and must make his own chart. So he refuses to follow the chart.

So far as we are able to see, this about illustrates the prevailing skepticism of the better class of rejecters of revelation. Some of them are aggressive, and declare that they have not simply outgrown but that they have exploded the whole theory of a supernatural book. It is discovered to be a relic of superstition.

Science has indeed achieved great things! It has given the earth a new speech; it is daily bringing us new revelations; we are learning matchless things which our fathers never knew; the old home is made richer than they ever dreamed, or we ever hoped, by the disrobing of its mysteries above our head and beneath our feet. But can any one name one of these great discoveries that has displaced a single stone in the foundation, or sprung a joint in the wall, of the sacred structure of revelation? Has historical research or criticism laid bare incongruity or error in its statement of facts, or deliverances of doctrine? We are not aware of any such fact. It has happened many times before that men have dreamed that the citadel was stormed, and shouts of victory have gone up. The present roaring is nothing new, except in the loudness of

the braying and the mingling of the shrill feminine key in the strain.

We cheerfully concede that there are men of respectable character among those who reject Christianity, but it remains true that, whatever the ground of the rejection and however estimable the parties, the contest is one between darkness and light, and the combatants on the respective sides march under these adverse banners. He who opposes Christianity in that very fact musters with Gog and Magog under the captaincy of Satan against God, and is an enemy to truth and righteousness; the more respectable, the more deadly. Christianity is the cause of God Almighty against the kingdom of evil, or it is a fraud. There is no middle ground. If it is God's cause, whosoever opposes it opposes God; whosoever stands with its enemies stands against God. There are but two parties in the moral universe: those who are for God, and those who are against him. Christ himself hath said, "He that is not with me is against me." This is a fact which must not be lost sight of. The issue can never be fought out on any other ground; it will admit of no compromise. Let the appropriate flags float over the opposing hosts, and let every man choose his captain and comrades and take his stand with them. This truth and fairness require. Truth wants no traitors in her camp. Christianity acknowledges no neutral territory, and respects no non-combatants. There are pulpits and altars called after her name which she disowns. She blazons as her emblem the cross. Her battle-cry is "Jesus, the Son of God." Her leader bears written on his thigh, "Lord of lords and King of kings." The armies of heaven follow him. The armies of hell are leagued against him. Every man must choose which side he will take in this day of battle. Is it hard to determine under which banner we will march? However hard, we must accept the responsibility. Difficulties there are. There is nothing good or great

that does not involve difficulty. Where difficulties do not exist we create them.

There are several things, however, which ought to be said with respect to alleged difficulties in this case. This is due to the serious-minded and earnest friends of truth both among believers and doubters—all sincere inquirers after truth.

There are real difficulties, which grew out of the nature of the subject. Some of them will yield to growing knowledge; some will remain permanently; they do not at all affect the question whether the Bible contains a supernatural revelation; they do affect certain theories with respect to the revelation, and certain doctrines embraced in it. Concerning these, dogmatism is unwise and liberty of difference must be allowed. There is an essence of faith which must be preserved and maintained intact; but there are accidents and accessories that are not important, and may be modified; and there are interpretations concerning which there must be liberty of dissent. The recollection and recognition of these facts will do away with all the embarrassments to faith which come from any of the difficulties alleged against revelation.

What are these difficulties?

First, as most prominent and most vital in the thought of the age, is the difficulty arising from the doctrine of inspiration. Christianity rests on the doctrine of inspiration; the doctrine that the Bible contains a deliverance of truth from God to man by direct revelation. If, now, we raise the question, How can this be? we are at once confronted with a difficulty. No man can explain how. The how it is possible is not matter of the revelation, and it is not matter of human knowledge; and there is no necessity that we should understand it in order to put faith in the fact. It is with it as

Inspiration ob-
jected to.

it is with respect to every other fact we meet. Does any man know how it is that he can reveal himself to his fellow man? He knows that he can and does—that suffices. He comes to the knowledge that he does reveal himself to his brother man by perceiving that an idea which was in his own mind has, upon the employment of certain sounds or motions, been transferred to another mind. That is as far as he can go. In like manner we can perceive that, in some mysterious way, God transfers his thought to a human mind, when we find the human mind having a thought which it could derive from no other source but God, as in the case of prophecy. The proof is absolute, but the how is unknown. The difficulty of ignorance as to the how inspiration is effected arises, to faculties such as we possess, from the intrinsic obscurity which invests the operation, but does not throw doubt upon the fact itself in the slightest measure. Inspiration is established as a fact. That is all that is necessary to faith.

But this does not remove all the difficulty from the question of inspiration. The question recurs, What of the Bible is inspired? And the attempt to answer that straightway brings us into a new swarm of troubles.

A class of extremists, under the imagination that they put greater honor on the Bible, contend for the inspiration of the entire contents of the holy book. They are not content even with that, but strengthen the statement Theories of inspiration. by declaring that it was immediately dictated word for word, if not the punctuation points. This is evidently an unwarranted assumption, and loads the doctrine of inspiration with a burden it is neither required nor able to bear. There is not a word in the book which implies it, and it is wholly unnecessary to the establishment of its claim. There is much found scattered throughout its pages which needed no such verbal dictation, and for which there is no proof whatever of any such source.

Those who hold the view seem to imagine that if it be denied the entire claim is vitiated. It is a favorite piece of tactics with those who assail the doctrine of inspiration to put its defenders at disadvantage by requiring this extreme position, and then pointing out its weakness, which is not difficult to do, they claim that they have overthrown the doctrine of inspiration!

There are certain portions of the Bible that show themselves to be inspired, and to have been delivered by immediate dictation; and in such cases the claim is specifically avowed, as in the tables of the law and passages prefaced by a "thus saith the Lord;" but it is not necessary, even in all such cases, to assume that the deliverance was absolutely verbal.

There is another class of inspirationists, not less loyal than the class just named, who discard the dictation theory, both as unnecessary and as certainly incorrect. They hold to the position that, while portions were possibly verbally dictated, as a general fact the Spirit inspired certain ideas, and permitted the amanuensis to set it forth in language and figure furnished by his own mind; and that there was a less inspirational part supplied by the amanuensis himself, but under a guiding superintendence. This position they fortify by the variety of style which is discernible in the several authors.

There is still a moderate school of inspirationists who would limit inspiration to simply prophetic portions of Scripture; but the great bulk of Christians, learned and unlearned, divide themselves between the two classes above named. The common and prevailing theory, until recently, was undoubtedly the first named; and except among critical students without doubt that view still holds; but without doubt the center is shifting to the second theory. That one of these views is substantially correct there is every reason to believe. Meantime the diffi-

culty which is manifest does not at all affect inspiration, but only its method and extent. Where there is no absolute knowledge to guide us, and no court of final resort, and where there is agreement in the substance, we may well be patient and wait for light.

Nor need this difficulty as to the extent and method and measure of inspiration in the slightest manner impair our faith that we have a supernatural revelation underlying Christianity. Of that we have absolute proof. It may be well now to consider, In what way does the question of inspiration affect the still deeper question of the truth of the Bible as to its doctrinal teachings and historical recitations?

To that question we have to answer, that, if it were possible to show that the Bible is uninspired, or that it contains no supernatural deliverances, that fact would reduce it to a fraud, and entirely destroy its authority; but it might, even in that case, be a generally true history of the events it relates, and there might be a substance of truth in some of its important doctrinal pronouncements. Falsity in its pretense of inspiration would not necessarily throw discredit on all its statements, but only on those which claimed a supernatural character. It might be purely human, and even false, in its statement of the source of many of its important utterances, and yet might be true both in the recitation of its main facts, the supernatural excepted, and in some of its ethical and doctrinal contents; but it could have no claim to the character of a divine revelation.

On the other hand, if it were possible to show that every word contained was under the immediate dictation of the Holy Ghost, that showing would, of course, itself be absolute proof that every word in it is absolute truth. No other evidence would be needed, or could strengthen the proof of its truth. No doubt this feeling or conviction explains the tenacity with

which many have been, and still are, inclined to the dictation theory. They have the feeling that in letting it go they are in some measure weakening the evidence of the absolute truth of the Bible, and so undermining its authority. It is a plausible idea; but when we consider the tremendous strain put upon the defense we may well hesitate to avail ourselves of it.

But if now we take the second theory, which claims dictatorial inspiration in a fractional part and inspiration of the ideas in a still larger part, leaving the amanuensis to clothe the inspired idea in the drapery of his own style, and yet possibly a still larger fraction of simply human recitation under the general guidance of the Spirit as to the matter to be introduced, combining the human and the divine in the composition of the holy book, how does it affect the question of its truth and authority? Clearly the theory puts the proof of the truth of some of the contents upon a different ground from the dictation theory, but does it put it to any serious disadvantage, and does it put any essential doctrine in any peril? Surely not. As a fact all the parts are true, but some have, as the only proof of their truth, the attest of inspiration. They are such things as could only be known by inspiration, and the proof of the inspiration is their proof. Of this kind are the prophecies, and great ethical doctrines and principles. These must have the seal of divine authentication. When we come to the New Testament the whole ministry of Christ is the equivalent of dictatorial inspiration, since every word is supported by the miraculous vouchers furnished. Thus the whole body of sacred doctrines are shown to be direct emanations from God himself. The effect of the second theory is not to leave essential truth in any reduced certainty, but simply to do away with ascribing dictation to portions which did not need it, and which it is impossible to prove were not merely recitations of well known incidents under divine direction and superintendence. It was abso-

lutely necessary to Moses, for instance, that he should work his miracles by supernatural aid, and that his prophecies should have a direct inspirational source; but who can say that any thing more was necessary to the account he gives of the forty years in the wilderness than direction that he should keep a faithful journal as to the substance of the narrative? Inspiration where it was necessary, fidelity where it was not, were the only requisites to the truth of the whole, and the same is true in every other case.*

What, then, are the objecting facts? Let us group them. The doctrine of the Trinity, the divine-human person of Christ, creation. These are objected to as impossible. The doctrine of the fall, of atonement, of regeneration, as incredible. To these must be added unnecessary obscurity, errors, contradictions, defects, false conceptions, degrading acts ascribed to God, characters and deeds of saints discrediting them; to these again must be added a general narrowness and bigotry ascribed to the spirit of the book and culminating in the lives of Christians, and which opposes the system to human progress. These, it is believed, comprise the general grounds of objection. They, *in re*, make a formidable indictment. The first and second clusters are discussed at length in their appropriate places, but a brief reference to them may be in place here.

The doctrine of the Trinity, it is alleged, is impossible as involving an impossible conception. The logic is, that a book which teaches it cannot be true, and cannot, therefore, be divinely inspired. But how does it appear that the Trinity is impossible or its assertion absurd? Does any mind know that in respect of personality God is not three, and

Mention of the
objecting facts.

Doctrine of the
Trinity.

* For a full and able discussion of the subject, and its sound exposition, the reader is referred to article *Inspiration* in "McClintock and Strong's Cyclopædia."

could not be, and yet with respect of nature one? That he could not be three and only one in the same sense is perfectly certain, for the predication is in absolute contradiction; but is it as certain that he may not be three in one sense and only one in another? This is all that is claimed by the most thorough-paced Trinitarian. The doctrine is not that there are three Gods and yet only one God, but contrariwise, that there is but one God, in the unity of whose being there are three co-equal persons. The first conception is impossible, the second is incomprehensible but not impossible.

Take the doctrine concerning Christ, of a co-existence in one personality of a perfect Godhead and a real manhood. On what ground can this be said to be impossible? If the doctrine were that the Godhead is at the same time human, and the humanity at the same time essential Deity, there would be a contradiction, and the thing would be impossible. But that is not the teaching, but this rather: that in the Christ there is a union of proper Godhead with a proper and real humanity; the Godhead dwelling with the humanity in such form that the resulting personality or consciousness is undivided or inter-communicant—whether it is the Godhead dwelling in that speaks or acts or feels, or the human which is dwelt in, it is one ego in the consciousness. To assert that this is impossible is not warranted, for we can allege no ground of impossibility. It is not a contradiction. The several predicates are not subversive of each other. He that made the world, for all that we can see, might so unite himself to a babe as to make it possible for him to say, as to his human side, I am but a day old, and as to his divine side, I am without beginning of days, and the predication be uncontradictory—the one referring to the babe, the other to the Godhead uniting himself to and dwelling in it.

To avoid the contradiction it would only be necessary to know of which facet of the unique being the declaration is made.

Creation. It is said creation is impossible. But how does this appear? Take it in its deepest sense, as an act of power whereby that which did not exist is made to exist—an act whereby something is introduced into being. How does it appear that this is impossible? If the sup-
Creation.
 position were something commencing to be without a cause, or of a being arising where there was no antecedent being, then it would contradict an intuition, and the supposition would imply an impossibility; but the case is not one of these, and does not come under the same category. It does not appear that a being existing may not make that to exist which did not, and to assert that it is impossible is to assert that which cannot be either known or proved to be true. That it is beyond our power does not prove that it transcends any power. On the other hand, assuming the existence of God, we have in his omnipotence the adequate ground for whatever else exists; or in any event the opposite cannot be made to appear, and to assume it is without warrant of any kind. Surely the rejection of revelation on such grounds must be irrational in the extreme. We intuitively know that creative power must exist, and if we did not it is a conclusion to which we are forced by the facts of being.

These abstruse doctrines, it may be admitted, are not formulated most accurately in our creeds, or thoughts even, and riper study may give them more complete expression—no doubt will—but as dogmatic statements they cannot be shown to be inadmissible.

Take the second group. The account of the fall of man, it is said, is incredible. The word “fall” may

not be the happiest, but on what ground is it pretended that the story of what is said to have occurred in Paradise is incredible? It is safe to say that data do not exist to enable us to determine whether it is literal or allegorical. The best men disagree in judgment on that point, and however it may be decided, or whether or not it shall ever be decided, does not affect the truthfulness of the account. The fact set forth is the same in either case—either construction might be true, and neither is intrinsically incredible. It is simply a history of man's first disobedience, prior to which, of necessity, he must have had a law, otherwise he could not disobey. Now, there is nothing incredible in the idea that the law was an exceedingly simple command; that it was just that which is stated literally, or that which, if known, would answer to the parable, if it is an allegory; nothing incredible in the account of the conscious guilt and remorse which ensued, or in the statement of the divine compassion which ensued, inspiring hope of pardon. It is impossible to make out a case of incredibility here. There was a primal disobedience; it must have been followed by remorse. Why not in form just as narrated, or, if not in form, in substance? That that first disobedience has been followed by a universal tendency to sin and a universal sinning, who can doubt? Has any man ever lived that could truthfully acquit himself of the race virus? Not one. The race, then, is depraved, if by depravity we mean disposed to sin through heredity. For this polluted stream there must be a fountain-head; where should it be if not in the first disobedience? That the tendency is so strong that we have no power without divine help to turn it back, and that therefore deliverance must be of grace, is a universal experience. That is the whole teaching of revelation on the subject. All men are sinners; all men find in their nature a disposition to sin; all men consciously need help. How, then, can the book which

asserts facts of universal consciousness be incredible because of such assertion ?

The atonement is the next offense. On what ground ? The atonement is a method of restoring transgressors. Is it incredible that God would seek to restore them ? Is not sin an evil, and the tendency to sin a misfortune ? Would not a merciful God be interested to cure the evil and remedy the misfortune ? Is it incredible, then, that he has done so ? Or is the fault rather with the method than the fact ? He must have some method. Can a better be shown than that which revelation propounds ? It is expressed in these words : " God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but have everlasting life." What part of this statement is incredible ? Guilt needs pardon. How else shall it escape remorse ? There must be a ground of pardon not destructive of law. It must include restoration, or the forgiveness itself would be in vain. Can the ground be less than genuine repentance and faith ? Can these be secured to a soul smitten with despair and spiritual paralysis without a revelation that will inspire hope ? Could any revelation be more effectual than the fact and story of incarnate love ? Where, then, is the intrinsic improbability or incredibility in the Gospel which reveals it ?

Regeneration is a stone of stumbling. Wherefore ? Is not that precisely our greatest need ? How can we be saved from sin without it ? If left as we are we shall go on sinning forever—the fountain of evil must continue to send out its bitter streams. Is there any thing intrinsically incredible that God, who, by common faith of all, desires to save us, would find some way to work a cure in the fountain itself ? But is it not that that is meant by regeneration ? Is it not intuitively certain that we

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cannot be saved without it? It is salvation. It is not the being pardoned alone that we need, not simply a general amnesty, not the going to heaven even. Our want is personal wholeness; righteousness within. Until this is effected nothing is done. Can we accomplish this for ourselves? Then is it unthinkable that God, out of pure love, would renew us; would beget penitence in us; would aid us to faith; would create a holy love; would, by the indwelling of his Spirit, open in our souls a fountain of holy desires, and raise up within us barriers to sinful inclination and turn the bent of our nature the other way, so that in the outcome we should for evermore hate sin and love righteousness? How else could the cure be effected? But this is what is meant by regeneration. It is not, then, incredible. Nay, on any theory of salvation it is an absolute necessity. The Gospel sets forth a method by which it is brought about. It is simple. Can any better method be suggested? If not, then this is the most credible of all.

But it is further objected that the Bible is obscure and difficult of understanding, which a revelation ought not to be. Is this a real objection? Certainly, if it were obscure in matters which pertain to practice, or the things required in order to secure the benefits for which it is given, this would be a real objection. It manifestly ought to be, in all such respects, so plain as to meet the needs of the simple and uneducated, for such must always be the majority. And is it not so? To the question, "What must I do to be saved?" is the answer obscure or puzzling? Can it be pointed out in any practical matter of life wherein it is equivocal, indefinite, or obscure? Is it said, But its doctrinal teachings are difficult and incomprehensible? Is this a fault? The understanding of these doctrines is not made a condition of its benefits. But is it said, Still, they

ought to be plain, and that they are not is proof that they are not from God? Let us with candor examine whether this ground is well taken. Is there any obscurity in the revelation which does not necessarily lie in the nature of finite mind and the nature of the subject? If not, the objection can only stand in the assumption that such subjects ought not to be introduced into the revelation. Can this position be sustained? Surely not. If we assume there should be no obscurity, the question meets us, No obscurity to whom? The ignorant and unlearned? Then how meager must be its teaching! But if there must be obscurity to such, then the objection from obscurity cannot hold. Is it said, to the learned and earnestly inquiring? How, then, shall it say any thing about God, the spiritual world, man's ultimate state, and all correlated subjects, which, as to many phases, must, from the nature of the subjects, necessarily remain obscure to mind environed as the human mind is for the present life? And, further, ought we not to remember that time is necessary to develop both mind and the conditions for the removal of obscurity? The obscurities of to-day may not be intrinsic. Broader and better learning may remove them. Scientific knowledge is of slow growth. Why should we expect that theological science should be an exception? Is mind any more competent here than in other departments? If it requires ages, then, to get at perfect light, must we insist that broad day shall shine here immediately, where the subjects are intrinsically more recondite than there? Meantime, is it not sufficient if the revelation teaches plainly all things that pertain to duty and are necessary to salvation?

Let us not make the mistake of imputing to the Bible, as ground of objection, doctrines which men have invented and ascribed to it. There are some such which have played a conspicuous part in creeds which we instinctively know cannot be

true. To make the Bible sponsor for them is to condemn it unjustly. Try it by its own teachings, as they are interpreted by the best reason, and we shall be sure to find that obscurity hangs around its horizons only when the subjects are too great for our faculties *now*, but which, as we ascend into improved conditions, may yet come out into the pure light. The most obscure things may be, nevertheless, the most certainly true, and we may know them to be so. Nature is full of obscurity. The finite dwell in a narrow sphere, and all beyond their limited vision must be shrouded. Revelation does not propose to lift the veil, except so far as to make known what is of practical use in matters of duty and privilege--matters that pertain to our salvation.

Mystery is a form of obscurity which has been most loudly decried. Just thought will find in the obscurities and mysteries of the Bible evidences of its divinity in the fact that they are manifestations of an intelligence whose ken is deeper and broader than our measuring line. Mystery must inevitably, not for to-day only, but forever, haunt finite mind. Truth which is infinite must involve mystery to powers which are limited; after it becomes known, the grounds of it may still be wrapped in utter obscurity. This characterizes all our knowledge. We widen *the* horizon and see to-morrow what we cannot see to-day, but *a* horizon still remains. All that we have any right to demand is that that shall not be imposed on us as truth which our faculties cannot accept as such either because there is not sufficient proof or because there is proof to the contrary. We have a right to demand that mystery shall not be made a cloak for what contradicts our knowledge.

But, it is said, there are errors, defects, contradictions. This charge, could it be sustained, would necessarily be fatal, unless they are trivial and such as can be accounted for. If they are

simply verbal, and such as might be introduced in translation or by the accidents of transmission, and do not affect the sense or integrity of the doctrine or narrative, they can have no great weight. A revelation from God could not be marred by any real error or defect. If the charge is not sustainable it becomes a most commanding element of proof instead of objection, since were it a merely human production the charge could be sustained. No book treating of the subjects which load its pages, composed at the time and under the circumstances of its production, could possibly escape such faults. And if they existed they must long since have been ascertained under the continuous criticism to which it has been subjected. The only seeming successes are the trivial disagreements in the order of some of the events narrated in the New Testament, and some assumed antagonisms to science in the Old. It is not improbable that some errors have arisen in transcribing. It is almost a miracle that they have not been numerous. It is quite probable that the ancient chronology has become, to some extent, confused; and it is not impossible that complete accuracy would, if it could be reached, carry the date of man's creation back some thousands of years; but the case is by no means settled. But, granting in the few cases cited what is assumed, how far short of invalidating the book do they fall! They do not affect a single fact; they do not confuse a single doctrine; they do not overthrow a single statement. The cosmogony of Moses accords with the best settled conclusions of geology; a fact which, when we consider the state of ignorance on the subject when it was written, cannot be explained on any principle but that of his inspiration, or the inspiration of the source from which he derived it. We assume for it the value of a prime proof in support of, rather than objective against, its claim. The anachronism in the Book of Joshua, which is boasted by enemies, arising from the fact that, claiming to be written by

him, it gives an account of his death, is explained to any candid mind by the natural supposition that to his own history, written by himself, the note was appended referring to his death. Incidental additions of the kind, which always proclaim themselves, do not impair the integrity of historic writings except with the uncandid and prejudiced. The differing genealogies of Christ that are so ostentatiously paraded have been long ago explained as the two lines of descent, one giving the genealogy of Joseph and the other that of Mary. The purposes of the record do not require a complete list in either case, but no criticism has been able to show that there is any defect. The slight differences in the order of the events of Christ's ministry, and the slight discrepancies in the account of what occurred at his crucifixion and resurrection, have been magnified into great importance. But it only shows how faultless the narrative is, since no grave objections can be alleged. Not one of the writers assumes to give an exact *pro forma* statement, but simply a truthful narrative of the works wrought by Christ in their general order. The same is true of the account given of his resurrection. They do not disagree or contradict each other, but one gives what another omits. The difference is precisely that which will be found in the straightforward, honest statements of any two or more witnesses who give a perfectly truthful statement of what they personally saw, and serves to show their veraciousness rather than the contrary.

To assail a book making the extraordinary claim set up by the Bible, and originating as it did, and descending from a remote antiquity, and covering such a breadth of history, and loaded with such immensity of detail, and making deliverances on a vast variety of subjects, and so endless in its allusions to customs, opinions, and institutions, requires no great genius; and that it endures the often malicious scrutiny *without absolute*

ruin is itself a wonder of wonders; that it comes out of the flames without the smell of fire either establishes its truth or is a miracle not inferior to any that it records.

In conclusion, What is the combined force of the whole argument? It is true that a cable is no stronger than its weakest part; but this cable is made of many strands, and its strength equals their united strength at the weakest point. The question is confessed to be of the greatest importance, however it may be decided. It is the part, therefore, of reason to weigh and examine the evidence without passion, and reach a conclusion according to its value. If the argument submitted is perceived to be not developed to its full strength, it is not the part either of wisdom or honesty to decide by its weakness, but by its strength were it developed in its utmost force. It ought not to be a war of wits, where the most skillful wins. It is a search after truth in which it is impossible that any human being should have any interest to deceive or be deceived, and in which every human being has the profoundest interest to avoid deception. It has been our aim to keep this in view in the entire course of the argument. Prudence requires that we should be on our guard against false influences pro or con. Our danger lies mainly in this direction; more for fear than in the difficulty of the problem itself. If there were no such misleading circumstances—if the question were, plain and simple, Is Christianity supported by evidence?—there would be no negative answer; there never would have arisen any dissent; there would have been no criticism about prophecy or miracle; the historical contents of neither the Old nor New Testament would have awakened suspicion; the doctrines would have excited no controversy. The entire Christian scheme is so manifestly true, in such complete harmony with the moral conscience and real needs of the race, that it would be accepted

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as nature itself is accepted. That which puts the claim at disadvantage is the accusative part of the system; the demands it makes on us which cross our inclinations; and the menaces which awaken fear. These make us hypercritical. We become partisans against it, and our wits are sharpened and set on the keen hunt for some flaw or loop-hole of escape; proofs are lowered in value and difficulties are invented and distorted. The mind loses its balance, and that calmness so indispensable to sound judgment. It is needful that we should be on guard against self-delusions. It is well for us to remember that truth is truth, and that by it we must stand or fall. Eternity will test the ground on which we stand.

We cannot close this long discussion without a brief *résumé* of the argument offered. The restatement will be brief, and serve to present the points made in a single view.

The argument starts with, as its first point, a statement of the ineradicable religious nature of man and his conscious intuition of responsibility. This indisputable fact, it is argued, furnishes a reason why, in some way, he should be able to come to an adequate knowledge of God, and of what would be acceptable to him; it imputes that he should know the mind of God, and also renders it reasonable to suppose that in some way he would be aided to that knowledge.

Second. That such knowledge is not, for all the purposes of his happiness and responsibility, sufficiently within his reach from natural sources. Left to himself, his faculties are not able to deduce the knowledge which is desirable and necessary to his full spiritual development and needs; that if this is so of the most gifted under the most favorable circumstances, it is much more true of the masses of men who have limited faculty and opportunity.

Third. That, therefore, a supernatural revelation is *prima facie* probable, and that such has always been the instinctive

belief of mankind, as discovered in their yearnings and prayers for special divine help.

Fourth. That a supernatural revelation, if given, would be communicated with adequate and suitable attests, and would have a permanent and immutable form, and would not be subject to the caprice of individual and incompetent minds; that it would, therefore, crystallize in the form of an intelligent written language, duly accredited.

Fifth. That such revelation is contained in the holy books of the Jewish and Christian Scriptures; the proofs of which are:

1. The collected books themselves; not in the fact that they exist and set up the claim, but in the fact of their unique character in view of the time and circumstances of their origin.

2. The prophecies which pervade them; and which are unanswerably shown to be numerous and explicit, and absolutely beyond the power of any unaided human mind, and therefore point to a supernatural origin.

3. The miraculous works performed by the prophets of the Old Testament and the Founder of the New, proving that God himself attested their sayings. These—the prophecies, which are supernatural in the realm of mind, and physical miracles, which are supernatural effects in the realm of matter—are shown to be so numerous as to be a pervading part of the revelation, and to be just those attests which are absolutely indispensable.

4. The internal *contents* of the books. This proof involves the facts of their veraciousness, their practical importance, their occultness apart from divine help, their ethical completeness, their perfect adaptation to meet the wants of men, and their power to accomplish that for which they are given.

5. Experimental proof. This involves effects wrought in the consciousness, which in two ways serve as experimental proof does in matters of physical science: effects which we intuitively know ought to flow from a revelation, as the end for

which alone it could be given, and some effects which it promises on certain conditions, and which, when the conditions are fulfilled, do follow declarative of its truth.

6. Collateral proof. This is of two kinds: (a) proof from its beneficial influence on those who receive and obey it in all the matters that pertain to their welfare, with regard to character and happiness; and, (b) concomitant with this, its influence on general society, elevating and purifying it in all respects, and the influence it would exert if not obstructed: the character of men and nations and worlds it would make.

Under this head also is included the proof found in the fact of its present existence and status in the world, on the ground that had it been *pseudo* it would have been impossible for it to make its way and acquire its present commanding position, all the circumstances of the case considered.

These are the proofs alleged. It is confidently asserted that they are precisely the proofs which would exist if it were a revelation, and that they are complete; no other in kind being either needed or conceivable. Its accrediting is appropriate and full.

Objections.—In presenting these points of argument we have remembered that each one has been objected to both on specific and general grounds, and the objection has been considered. Skepticism is a negative system. Its main attitude is simply that of an objector; it neither proves nor disproves, but defends and propagates doubt by challenging the witness. It is obvious that it would be impossible for a revelation to be given that might not be assailed in this way. No doctrine or fact can be propounded, however plain and obviously true, that may not be called in question. Any proof may be challenged, and therefore the mere fact of objection bears nothing against the claim; and in this case it was shown in the argument that there are special causes "*in perpetuum*" which operate to the

re-assertion of objections, such as the nature and beneficent tendency in mind to challenge any truth ; a disposition in all minds to differ and cavil, and see what can be said on the opposite side, which gives rise to quibbles, possible sophistries, witticisms, and petty criticisms ; and pride of intellect, disposition to assert superiority to the vulgar crowd, eclecticism, which breeds educated skepticism ; low and loose passions ; imbruted moral nature, which produces vulgar, foul-mouthed infidelity, that crime and baseness of every kind may have immunity. To one of these classes all doubt may be traced. The objections, of course, will vary according to the kind of mind which produces it.

If doubters would feel the obligation to propound a scheme which they would feel bound to defend, the case would soon be closed ; but with nothing to do but attack, and without care whether there be just ground for the assault, and with a willingness to repeat objections, though they may have been parried a thousand times, the appearance of a fight may be indefinitely prolonged, and a few waspish and persistent doubters may produce the impression that really there is fresh ground of combat, when, in fact, there is nothing but the same old, stale, many-times-answered objections. Why, then, it is sometimes asked, pay any attention to the assailants ? Many good and wise men question the usefulness of continued apologetical discussion. The sufficient reason is found in the fact that each new generation is fresh to the controversy, and as often as the old doubt is revived the many-times-repeated answer must be re-affirmed. It is not that the Bible is still waiting for proof, or subject to any greater strain than before, but that its ancient and complete defenses may be made known to the new generation of interested minds. For their sakes, to rescue them from the snares and artifices of unreasonable and many times unscrupulous adversaries, the contest is continued. Meantime the

assailed citadel reveals no breach in its impregnable walls, and, rooted as a mountain of granite, serenely receives the poisoned missile without suffering from its venom. There seems at times to be a commotion about the walls, both without and within, as if some weakness had been found; shouts are heard, the requiem of the Church sung; but when the smoke and air are cleared away, the heavy battlements are found still intact, the walls unconscious that there has been an assault, and the astonished performers of the funeral dirge discover to their surprise that "the body of the Lord is not in their sepulcher." In fact there has been no appreciable effect produced. More than once the painful farce has been enacted of celebrating the obsequies of Christianity. More than once the seamless garment of the dead Christ has been divided and parcelled out to his would-be murderers; philosophers, knaves, and bands have exulted and mutually congratulated themselves around the cross and grave; but, to their chagrin and mortification, somehow their prey escapes them, and is seen serenely walking the earth and ascending into heaven.

A P P E N D I X.

NOTE A. (See page 33.)

AUTHENTICITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

[The following extract from Mair's "Evidences of Christianity" is of great value.]

THE first of the three ancient manuscripts which we cite as a witness to the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures is that which is called the *Alexandrine*. It receives its name from the fact that, in the seventeenth century, it was brought from Alexandria, in Egypt, in which city it had very probably been written. It is now preserved in the British Museum in London. It is written, or printed with the pen, in neat capital letters. It is agreed among scholars that it is about fourteen hundred years old, so that it takes us back by a single leap to the year A. D. 450 or so. It is not quite complete, being somewhat mutilated by age and wear; but it contains portions of all the books of the New Testament, and shows us most explicitly that the Church possessed the same New Testament about the year 450 as we now possess.

The second ancient manuscript whose testimony we adduce is the *Vatican* manuscript. It is so called because it is preserved in the Pope's library in the Vatican at Rome. Like the *Alexandrine*, it is written in capital letters, though they are not formed quite so beautifully. It is, however, somewhat older, its age being over fifteen hundred years, so that it carries us back at once to about the year 350 or so.

It is, unfortunately, incomplete, wanting Revelation and some of the smaller epistles, but it bears unmistakable testimony to the fact that the New Testament of that early age was substantially the same as we now possess.

The third manuscript which we cite as a witness is, if possible, one which is more interesting than either of the two preceding. It is that which is known among scholars as the Sinaitic manuscript. It is so called because it was discovered in the year 1859 at Mount Sinai, in the old monastery of St. Catherine there.

Tischendorf, the German scholar, was on a mission to the East in search of manuscripts, when he had the honor assigned him by Providence of discovering this inestimable treasure in that ancient convent. The circumstances connected with its discovery are quite romantic, but of course we cannot enter into them at present. He succeeded in securing it, and it is now safely deposited in the Imperial Library at St. Petersburg. It is the most beautifully written of all the three. It is about fifteen hundred years old, having been written probably about A. D. 350. It contains the New Testament complete, and thus affords us the most explicit testimony that the New Testament of that early age was the very same that we now possess.

We have cited these three venerable witnesses from the three capitals of Christendom—the first from London, the capital of Protestantism; the second from Rome, the capital of Roman Catholicism; and the third from St. Petersburg, the capital of the Greek Church, and we see that their testimony is most explicit. It is not only explicit, but it perfectly agrees, and it demonstrates that the early Church possessed and used the same New Testament with ourselves about the year 350, or two hundred and fifty years after the death of John and the close of the apostolic age.

We are now ready to take another step back, and here we come to the main part of our argument. Let the reader try to transfer himself in thought to the second half of the second century of our era. That is, we are now to contemplate the period

extending from A. D. 150 to A. D. 200. The apostle John, it is believed, died about the year 100, so that we have now before our mind the period extending from fifty to one hundred years after the death of John, and the end of what may be called the apostolic age.

We have, therefore, before us a period when men, not a few, were still alive who had seen and conversed with John, and when multitudes were still living who had seen and conversed with those who had seen and conversed with him. Such is the age to which we are now introduced.

But before proceeding to call our witnesses let us look for a little at the Church in this early period. It had spread over the length and breadth of the Roman empire, and even into India and Ethiopia, and other regions beyond its boundaries. Probably it had not as yet the majority of the population in any large city or province, and very likely its entire adherents may have fallen short of two millions. Nevertheless it had gained a footing in almost every city from Britain in the north, to Ethiopia in the south; from Persia in the east, to Spain in the west.

It must also be remembered that the books of the New Testament were habitually read on the Lord's day in the assemblies of the faithful throughout the Church. That is a fact which is not denied and not deniable. The sacred books were thus kept constantly before the eyes and minds of the ancient Christians, so that they could easily detect whether any old and acknowledged book was rejected or lost, and whether any new and unauthorized book was introduced.

In other words, this universal system of reading the New Testament in the public meetings of the Church enabled all Christians to act as guardians of the New Testament and faithful witnesses to its integrity. We can easily see how impossible it would be in the present day to introduce any new book into the services of the Church, or drop any important one

altogether, without all Christians noticing it and raising a loud and universal protest. In those early ages, when the New Testament Scriptures, although not in the hands of the people, were read much more extensively in the public services than they are now, we may safely conclude, in like manner, that no new book could be introduced or old one expelled without awakening the attention of the entire body of Christians. What, then, is the testimony of the Church of the second half of the second century to the leading books of the New Testament?

We can, of course, directly ascertain what was the New Testament of this early age only from the representative authors who lived at the time. Happily, a considerable number of books have come down to us, the works of fathers and other men eminent in the Church during that period. There were also some translations of the New Testament already made from the Greek into other languages before the year 200. We now proceed to cite as witnesses some of those fathers and versions, and examine them as to the books which were then accepted in the Church as genuine and authentic.

We cite them from different countries, and even from different continents, in order to show the more conclusively and impressively that the entire Church throughout its length and breadth accepted substantially the same New Testament as ourselves.

The first witnesses which we cite are from the continent of Europe, and the first of these is from the Church of ancient France. We cull as the representative and mouth-piece of that Church Irenæus, the bishop of the well-known city of Lyons. He was a native of Asia Minor, and had sat at the feet of Polycarp, who had sat at the feet of the apostle John. He probably sealed his testimony with his blood by dying as a martyr in A. D. 202. He was a somewhat extensive author, and his works, which have been preserved to our

day, are enough to form a very considerable volume. That he is a witness of the highest character and value is beyond all possibility of contradiction. And his testimony is full and explicit. He mentions all the four gospels; and so clear and decided is the confidence of the Church in his day in regard to the matter that he declares there are and can be only four. But as nothing gives the modern mind such a firm assurance as a few statistics, even though they should be immediately forgotten, we venture to give the following statistics of his quotations. They will be found to be at least approximately correct, and we believe rather under than over the mark. He mentions Matthew, and he quotes from him, either directly or by way of reference, about one hundred and eighty times; Mark, and quotes from him about fifteen times; Luke, and quotes from him about one hundred and twenty-five times; John, and quotes from him over eighty times. It is therefore beyond all doubt that Irenæus and the Church of France in this early age accepted our four gospels, and these four alone. But our witness mentions also the Acts of the Apostles, and quotes from it about fifty times; Romans, and quotes from it above sixty times; 1 Corinthians, and quotes from it upward of seventy times; 2 Corinthians, and quotes from it seventeen times. He mentions also Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Revelation, and quotes from all of them frequently. He also mentions and quotes from many of the smaller epistles. Such is the testimony of Irenæus, Bishop of Lyons, and witness of the Church of France. It is most explicit, and proves incontestably that already this distant Church in the latter half of the second century, from fifty to a hundred years after the close of the apostolic age, possessed the same New Testament as we now possess.

We now pass over the Alps into Italy, and inquire what was the New Testament of the Italian Church in this early age.

We cite three witnesses as representatives of this Church. The first is an ancient list of the New Testament books called the Muratorian Canon because it was discovered and published by Muratori, at Milan, in the year 1740. This interesting old canon, or list of sacred books, belongs to about the year 170, and therefore falls within our period. It is a very imperfect production; but it bears explicit testimony to all the books of our New Testament except Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, and 3 John.

The second witness which we cite in regard to the Italian Church is the ancient Latin version of the New Testament. Already, at this early period, a translation had been made into Latin for the use of the Christians who spoke that language. Perhaps it had been made originally in North Africa, but an edition of it was already current in Italy. We know the books which it contained from some very ancient manuscripts and the references in the ancient Latin fathers. It contained substantially the same books as are mentioned in the Muratorian Canon.

The third witness is Hippolytus, whose chief work was discovered within the memory of the present generation. He was a leading presbyter, and probably a schismatic bishop, at Rome. He died as an old man and a martyr about A. D. 237, so that much of his manhood fell within our period. Of his numerous works enough has been preserved to form a considerable volume; and there can be no doubt as to his testimony, for it is full and explicit. He quotes from Matthew, directly or indirectly, more than fifty times; from Mark about six times; from Luke, twenty-five times; from John about fifty times; from Acts seven times; from Romans about ten times; from 1 Corinthians about the same, and in a similar proportion from most of the other epistles, until we come to Revelation, from which he quotes about eighteen times. When we take the

testimony of Hippolytus along with that of the Muratorian Canon and the ancient Latin version, we can have no hesitation, on the evidence of such witnesses, in concluding that the Italian Church in the second half of the second century already possessed substantially the same New Testament as we now possess.

We next pass from Europe over to Africa. Right over against Italy, in and around Carthage, in the region of the modern Algeria and Tunis, a flourishing Church had existed from the dawn of Christianity. It was the Church which afterward numbered among its bishops Cyprian and Augustine. At the period under review it could already boast of one of the most distinguished Christian writers of the age. We mean Tertullian, the first in time of the great Latin Christian authors. He was born probably about A. D. 160, and died probably about 220. So that his testimony is valid for this special period. We cite him as the representative witness of the North African Church. And his testimony is most explicit and abundant. His extant works are somewhat extensive, and in them he refers to or quotes from all the books of the New Testament except Philemon, 2 Peter, 2 and 3 John.

But as nothing gives the mind such a substantial and vivid view as a few figures, it may be well again to state a few approximate statistics. He quotes from or refers to Matthew about four hundred times; Mark, about eighty times; Luke, about five hundred times; John, about two hundred and forty times; Acts, about one hundred and ten times; Romans, about one hundred and sixty times; 1 Corinthians, about three hundred and fifty times; 2 Corinthians, about one hundred and twenty times; and so on proportionately through all but the very smallest epistles, until we come to Revelation, from which he quotes about eighty times. Such evidence as this requires no comment. Tertullian and the North African

Church clearly testify that they used our present New Testament in the second half of the second century.

We pass eastward along the northern coast of Africa until we come to Alexandria, in Egypt. In this ancient city Christianity was planted in the apostolic age. There existed there already a flourishing theological school, which produced a number of famous fathers and Christian authors. We have more particularly to do at present with the well-known Clement of Alexandria, who falls within our special period. Like Tertullian, he left somewhat extensive writings behind him, many of which have survived to our day in the original Greek. They contain quotations from or references to almost every book in the New Testament, the exceptions again being such small epistles as Philemon, 2 Peter, and 3 John. He quotes from Matthew or makes reference to his gospel about one hundred and eighty times; from John above sixty times; from Acts about twenty times; from Romans about one hundred and ten times; from 1 Corinthians about one hundred and fifty times; from 2 Corinthians more than thirty times; and in similar proportion from all the remaining epistles, with the exceptions already mentioned, until we come to Revelation, from which he quotes about twelve times. The outcome of all this testimony is very plain. The Church of Alexandria, the most learned, critical, and scientific Church of the age, acknowledged beyond all contradiction the same New Testament in the second half of the second century as we now possess in the nineteenth.

We now enter the continent of Asia, in which most of our sacred books had their origin. We begin by citing the ancient Syrian Church as a representative witness. In Syria—the country lying to the north of Palestine, bounded on the west by the Mediterranean, and stretching away eastward to the Euphrates and beyond it—Christianity was already planted in the

apostolic age. But as the Syriac language was totally different from Greek, being, in fact, a language cognate to the Hebrew, a translation of the New Testament soon became a necessity.

Accordingly, we find that a translation was made into Syriac at a very early date, probably in the first, certainly not later than the second half of the second century. This very ancient version, slightly modified, not only exists to the present day, but is the "authorized version," used by all the different sections of the Syrian Church—sections which go back to the fourth century. It is known by the name of the Peshito. It contained all the books of our present New Testament except Second and Third Epistles of John, Second Peter, Jude, and Revelation. This testimony might be further corroborated by that of Syrian authors belonging to this period, of whom some remains have been preserved to our day. But the Peshito itself is a sufficient witness, and testifies most explicitly to the fact that the Syrian Church already possessed substantially the same New Testament as ourselves, probably in the first, and certainly in the second, half of the second century.

From Syria we may pass northward to Asia Minor, and cite the Church of this region as a witness. Irenæus, whom we have already examined as the representative witness of the Church in France, was a native of this region, and passed his early youth, he tells us, under the instruction of Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who was the disciple of the apostle John. He speaks of no divergence in regard to the leading sacred books as existing between the Church of Asia Minor and that of France.

He rather teaches the very opposite, so that his testimony may be fairly regarded as implying that substantially the same books were accepted by the Church of Asia Minor as were accepted by the Church of France, and as are accepted by ourselves.

But, in addition to his testimony, we shall immediately see that long before the second half of the second century the leading New Testament books can be proved to have been in current use in the Church in question.

In other words, we conclude from circumstantial evidence of the very strongest kind that in the second half of the second century the Church in Asia Minor used substantially the same sacred books as the Church in the nineteenth century.

Let us now endeavor to sum up this evidence, and ascertain the conclusion to which it points. We must remember that the evidence adduced is not that of individual, private, isolated men. It is the evidence of the Churches to which the writers belonged, of which they were office-bearers, and which they represent. Accordingly, the conclusion evidently is that already, in the second half of the second century—from A. D. 150 to 200, and within fifty years or so of the apostolic age—the Church over its length and breadth, from Syria in the east to Italy in the west, from France in the north to Egypt in the south, beyond all contradiction possessed substantially the same New Testament as we at present possess.

The testimony just adduced is extremely strong, though at first it may be somewhat difficult fully to realize its strength. It is that of a continual, organized society, whose life flows on without a break.

The Church began with the apostles. It spread out from Jerusalem. It continued to live and grow without the least interruption, like a healthy human being.

It might change its members to some extent from year to year, by death at the one end and conversions at the other, just as the human body changes its constituent particles of matter: but amid all this it retains its continuity and identity, though it is said to change its substance entirely every seven years.

We might in a way regard the Church as a gigantic mystic man—"the body of Christ"—living on continuously through the ages, changing its constituent particles slowly, but constantly keeping up an unbroken continuity of life. Its testimony, accordingly, is, in a manner, like that of an intelligent being who keeps on living through the ages, but whose eye becomes not dim, nor his force abated through the lapse of years.

We might even say that it is like that of several independent mystic men, for the Churches of Rome, Alexandria, Syria, and Asia Minor assuredly had an independent continuity of existence from the apostolic age, so that their testimony is also largely independent. Keeping this organic, living continuity of the Church vividly before our mind, we may most certainly accept the testimony of the Church in the second half of the second century as valid, not merely for the age in which it was given, but for eighty years before; that is, for the apostolic age. In other words, the testimony of the Church in the period specified is valid in the highest degree for the apostolic age, and bears evidence that the leading books of the New Testament are the genuine and authentic production of that age.

We may be pardoned for dwelling a little longer on this step of the argument because of its importance. Perhaps we may feel its power still more vividly if we look at the matter thus. Let us start with the year 150. We have already seen that the Church most certainly accepted the leading books of our New Testament at that date. But the vast majority of Church members living in A. D. 150 were living in 149, so that the testimony of the continuous Church in 150 is valid in 149. Again, the Church of 149 is the continuous Church of 148, 147, 146, 145, so that the testimony of the Church of 149 is valid for 145. But the majority of members of the Church

in 145 were in it in 140, so that the testimony of the Church of 145 is valid for 140. That is, the Church of 140 accepted the same New Testament, substantially, as the Church in 145 and 150. Again, the majority of the Church members in 140 were members in 135; their testimony is therefore valid for that date, and carries proof that the Church then accepted the same sacred books.

Thus we may pass on from year to year, because of the vital organic continuity of the Church, until we reach back to the apostolic age, feeling firmly safe at each step, and conclude with the highest certainty attainable in historic evidence that the New Testament books are the genuine production of the age of the apostles. Nowhere is there any break in the life of the Church, as if all its members had died out at any date and, after an utter gap, the Church had been somehow started anew.

In that case the argument would not have held with such force. But the continuity is most assuredly uninterrupted—the vast majority of the members of any given year overlapping the members of several previous and also of several succeeding years; nay, forming a constituent part of the membership of several preceding and succeeding years, so as to transmit the sacred books with an unbroken tradition.

This living continuity—the vast majority of presbyters and members of one year overlapping on the one side those who die, and on the other those who are admitted in the same year—makes it next to impossible that any book once accepted should have been lost or rejected, and that any new and forged book should have been surreptitiously introduced. We only require to contemplate how utterly impossible such an incident would be at the present day to see how impossible it must have been even then.

And what makes the argument stronger still is, the fact that

even the most determined scrutiny by the most hostile critics has not succeeded in pointing out the date, place, and circumstances after the apostolic age in which any book of the New Testament was forged and palmed off upon the Church as genuine, and finally united in the list of sacred books.

Perhaps it may help the reader to see more clearly and feel more vividly the force of the argument if we adduce as an illustration the fate of the later works of Aristotle.

He was, as every one knows, by far the greatest philosophical thinker, with perhaps only one exception, of all antiquity. His works, which are written in a strong and characteristic style, some time after his death entirely disappeared from the view of the world. They had been carried away from Athens to Asia Minor by a man of the name of Neleus. This man died, and the manuscripts remained in possession of his family. But when the kings of Pergamus began to collect their famous library, and were every-where gathering up books for this purpose, the family of Neleus, afraid to lose their precious treasure, hid the manuscripts in a cellar. There they lay for a period of one hundred and fifty years, during which they seem to have been utterly forgotten by the world, or at least given up for lost. But when they were again found and brought to light learned men had no difficulty, from a great variety of grounds, in coming to the certain conclusion that they were the genuine works of Aristotle.

And this though they had been utterly hidden out of sight for a hundred and fifty years. If learned men could attain to such assurance in regard to the works of Aristotle, which had entirely disappeared for a hundred and fifty years, much more may we trust the testimony of the Church in the second half of the second century in regard to the genuineness of the books of the New Testament, when we consider that this testimony extends back only over eighty years or so, and that the sacred

books were not buried out of sight like those of Aristotle, but publicly read in the meeting of the faithful on the Lord's Day throughout all the Church, north, south, east, and west.

But we are not left to bridge over the gap between A. D. 150 and the age of the apostles simply by an elaborate argument. We have also direct evidence of the utmost value. Happily a few small books and fragments have come down to us even from that early period, the period between the apostles and A. D. 150. In these literary remains we find explicit testimony to our New Testament books as already existing, and forming the spiritual food and the palladium of the Church. Of the works of Justin Martyr, who was born in Palestine about A. D. 100, wrote at Rome about 140 and later, and suffered martyrdom there about 166, enough has come down to us to form a fair-sized volume. His works are not addressed to Christians, and are not of such a nature as to admit of extensive quotation from most of the New Testament. But in his remains he refers explicitly to the gospels, though he does not mention the evangelists by name, and quotes from them all, although, like the ordinary preacher, often from mere memory. Indeed, his references to the life of our Lord are so numerous and abundant that a very full narrative might be constructed out of them. He mentions, also, Revelation, and if he does not quote from the epistles, it is because they do not lie in his way. This testimony of Justin is valid possibly for Palestine, and certainly for Rome, and for the first half of the second century.

Another writer whom we can adduce as witness from this period is Papias, the Bishop of Hierapolis, in Asia Minor, a Church mentioned in the last chapter of Colossians. He lived and flourished in the early part of the second century, say about 120, and was the contemporary, if not the disciple, of the apostle John. He certainly overlapped the apostolic age.

Only a very few fragments of his works have come down to us, the whole of which might be printed on a single page. But from these fragments, and the few notices preserved in ancient writers, we know that he used Matthew, Mark, and probably John, First John, Second Peter, and Revelation.

The testimony is largely supplemented by that of Polycarp, martyr-bishop of Smyrna, also in Western Asia. He was both a contemporary and disciple of the apostle John, so that his life also overlaps the age of the apostles. A small epistle of his has come down to us, written probably about the year 115. It is not quite so large as Colossians, and yet it contains upward of forty quotations from or references to our New Testament, taken in all from ten or twelve books. The testimony of Papias and Polycarp is valid for the Church in Asia Minor at the beginning of the second century.

We mention only another contemporary of John, Clement of Rome. His life lay largely within the apostolic age. He wrote an epistle to the Corinthians, which, happily, we still possess entire. It dates from about the year 95, so that it is probably as old as some of the books of the New Testament. In this epistle we find many sayings of our Lord which are found in our present gospels, though Clement does not refer explicitly to the gospels as his source of quotation or allusion; neither does he to the existence of the epistles to the Romans, 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, Hebrews, James, and 1 Peter. The testimony of Clement is obviously valid for Rome and the close of the first century.

The testimony above adduced might even be considerably increased if we were to descend into minute details. But the above will be sufficient to bridge over the chasm between the second half of the second century, in which the testimony is full and irresistible, and the apostolic age or close of the first century. The witnesses just adduced, especially

when viewed in the light of our previous argument, distinctly show that about the year 100 the same sacred books as we possess at present were known and received in the Church. But this was a time at which the apostle John was just dead, and, in any case, when multitudes were living who overlapped the apostolic age; who had themselves been the disciples and friends of the apostles, and who had even seen and used the original manuscripts. We therefore conclude that the leading New Testament books must have been the genuine and authentic productions of apostles and men of the apostolic age.

Before leaving this department of the subject, it may be well to remark that it would be a grand mistake to suppose that we now have all, or even one tenth part, of the evidence on which the early Churches accepted the books of the New Testament as the genuine productions of their authors. The vast bulk of evidence which they had before them, and on which they came to their decision, has been lost forever: only the decision remains, with some stray, and, for the most part, accidental facts of the evidence. But that is just what might have been expected, and it should in no way shake our faith.

When we look back on great trials or events of past history, we sometimes see that we possess the decision of the judges or of the age in regard to them, but not the facts on which it was founded. Yet we have little difficulty in accepting as trustworthy the decision of competent contemporaries when that decision is consentient. And so it is here. The mass of evidence has disappeared, but the decision remains. We know that the Churches in Rome, Egypt, Syria, and Asia Minor—Churches which had a continuous existence from the days of the apostles and had all the facts before them—substantially agreed. The case has been tried, as it were, by different independent juries, in widely distant parts of the world; they

unite in returning practically the same verdict; and surely we may accept the agreement, or rather unanimity, of the verdict as a reasonable substitute for the lost details of the evidence.

We now pass on to notice briefly the testimony of the ancient heretics to the sacred books of Christianity. In doing so, we shall cite our witnesses only from the first half of the second century. We know that heretics had already appeared upon the scene in the days of the apostles, and they were only still far too numerous. One positive benefit, however, which they achieved for the Church in all succeeding ages was to leave behind them their decided testimony to the Christian Scriptures. In their case, we have to do with the testimony of men who for the most part lived outside of the Church, who were more or less hostile to orthodox Christianity, and, therefore, were sure to criticize its sacred books with no favorable eye. In view of the many, perhaps of all, this fact should make their testimony more valuable, as being that of men free from all friendly bias—indeed, as being in some degree the testimony of enemies. Now, it is a singular and important fact that their testimony is very explicit. They fall back, as a rule, for their support on the same sacred books as the Church itself. So far as we can judge from their scanty remains, they quote more largely from them than do the orthodox, and certainly some of them speak more profusely about them as “Scripture,” using the very same method of quotation as they do in regard to the Old Testament. And this mode of procedure is most significant, for it implies that the Christian Scriptures were accepted by the Church of the age as the authoritative books, on which every system of doctrine must of necessity be founded.

We adduce the testimony of only two heretical teachers from this early period, from A. D. 100 to 150. The first of these whom we cite is Marcion. This man was a native of Pontus, in the north of Asia Minor, and son of the Bishop of Sinope, a

maritime city in that region. He was born about the year 100, and afterward removed to Rome, where he was already known as a full-blown leader of heresy, about 140. And what is his testimony in regard to our New Testament? We know, on the best of evidence, from different sources, that he positively accepted an abbreviated Luke and the first ten epistles of Paul. But one of the great accusations brought against him was just the fact that he mutilated or rejected sacred books which the Church regarded as authoritative. In addition to the books which he positively accepted, he bears direct testimony, by a tolerably explicit rejection of them, to the other three gospels and Revelation.

In other words, about the year 140, Marcion, the heretic, bears explicit testimony to three fourths of our present New Testament.

And this testimony may be regarded as valid even for remote Pontus, and certainly for Rome and the more central regions of the universal Church.

We cite as witness only another, and still more ancient, heretic. His name is Basilides, and his chief sphere of life seems to have lain in Egypt. He flourished about A. D. 120, and without doubt overlapped the apostolic age by a number of years. A few very small fragments of his writings have come down to us in the form of quotations by the fathers, who wrote to refute his opinions. He labored to support his views by the authority of the New Testament, and he often quotes from it, and generally as Scripture.

We have explicit proof, from the fragments and references which we still possess, that he accepted at least Matthew, Luke, John, Romans, 1 and 2 Corinthians, Ephesians, Colossians, and 1 Peter; that is, decidedly more than one half of our present New Testament. Of course it is not to be inferred for a moment that, because no allusions are made to the other books in

the scanty remains which survive, they did not exist, or were not acknowledged by Basilides. In other words, we see that this ancient heretic bears most important testimony to our sacred books, and it is the testimony of a man who not only was outside the pale of the Church, but whose life reached back into the apostolic age. The conclusion from all this is very forcible. It means that the Christian Scriptures were so firmly established, so widely accepted, and so well authenticated by evidence which could not at that time be controverted, that even heretics felt compelled to accept them and make the attempt to found their systems upon them. We may be well assured that if they had known them to be forgeries they would have followed a different course, and have shown them up as such. But not even Marcion, who rejected some of the books, did so, so far as we know, because they were forgeries, but only because in his view they were too Judaistic and one-sided. We may, therefore, extend to the New Testament generally the saying of Irenæus in his great work, "Against Heresies:" "So great is the certainty in regard to the gospels that even the heretics themselves bear testimony to them, and every one of them, starting from these gospels, endeavors to found his teaching thereupon."

But after all, it may still be said, is it not quite possible that the books of our New Testament may have been forged about the beginning of the second century? To this we answer, quite apart from the preceding evidence, that the thing is all but impossible. We know very well what the authors of that period could do, and there was not one of them capable in the least degree of forging books like those of the New Testament. We have but to read the New Testament carefully and then go on to read the Christian literature of this age, in order to see and feel at once what an unspeakable chasm exists between the two. In passing from the Christian Scriptures to these produc-

tions we are coming down from heaven to earth. Something like this is felt by all thoughtful readers, and frankly acknowledged even by such hostile writers as F. W. Newman. We know of no man, at the beginning of the second century, who could forge a single book of the New Testament. But the New Testament must have been written by at least seven or eight different authors. This must appear evident, even to the most uncritical reader, from the difference of style in the books. If, therefore, our sacred books were forgeries of this early age, there must have been several forgers at the work. But if there was not one capable of carrying out such a forgery, much more certain is it that there were not seven or eight. If it, nevertheless, be said that the names of those able forgers have been forgotten, while the names of far feebler men have been preserved, we may safely answer that this is well-nigh incredible. We can scarcely conceive that the Church should have utterly forgotten the names of its seven or eight ablest authors, and preserved the names of the men who, while they were heroic Christians, were nevertheless possessed of only average abilities, and very moderate literary power. This consideration, of itself, makes the hypothesis of wholesale forgery all but incredible and even impossible. How difficult it is to explain and account for things when people will not accept the simple, reasonable truth!

To sum up: when we remember the unbroken continuity of the life and testimony of the Church, and the agreement of that testimony so early as the second half of the second century in remote countries of Europe, Africa, and Asia; when we bear in mind that the New Testament was the very foundation of the life of the Church, that precious palladium for which it lived, and for which it willingly shed its best martyr blood; when we consider that the sacred books were constantly read in the assemblies of the faithful, so that they were familiar to the eyes and

ears of all, and also that no lynx-eyed enemy has been able to point out the occasion posterior to the apostolic age when any of the books were surreptitiously introduced: when we remember that by means of the scanty fragments which survive we can trace them back into the apostolic age, and that even the heretics who lived on the very border of that age unite in bearing the most explicit testimony to their existence and authority: when we further reflect that church history knows of no man in the first half of the second century capable of forging a single important book of the New Testament, not to say the whole of it: we may surely see that the proof is about as strong as we can reasonably expect. No doubt we no longer possess all the details of the evidence on which the early Church accepted the sacred books: but if we do not possess these details, we have the decision of the jury; we might say, not of one jury but of many, and some of them unfavorably prejudiced.

Men skilled in legal and historical evidence do not hesitate to accept as most trustworthy testimony the old charter of an ancient family or city which has been hid out of sight in the muniment chest for a century or two; with how much more confidence may we accept the united witness of Christians and heretics in the second century to the authenticity of the New Testament, which is the charter of the Church, the true family and holy city of God, when we remember that only a few years had then passed away since this sacred charter was actually written out, and that, by the constant exhibition and reading of it on the Lord's Day, it was kept continually before the eyes and minds of the Christian people!

NOTE B. (See page 55.)

NATURE AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

[The following note is from that great book of Bushnell's—"Nature and the Supernatural."]

THE Latin etymology of the word nature presents the true force of the term clear of all ambiguity. The nature (*natura*) of a thing is the future participle of its being or becoming—its about to be, or its about to come to pass—and the radical idea is, that there is in the thing whose nature we speak of, or in the whole of things called nature, an about to be, a definite futurity or fixed law of coming to pass, such that, given the thing, or whole of things, all the rest will follow by an inherent necessity. In this view nature, sometimes called "universal nature," and sometimes the "system of nature," is that created realm of being or substance which has an acting, a going on, or process from within itself, under and by its own laws. Or if we say with some that the laws are but another name for the immediate actuating power of God, still it makes no difference in any other respect with our conception of the system. It is yet as if the laws, the powers, the actings were inherent in the substances and were by them determined. It is still to our scientific, separated from our religious, contemplation a chain of causes and effects, or a scheme of orderly succession determined from within the scheme itself.

Having settled thus our conception of nature, our conception of the supernatural corresponds. That is supernatural, whatever it be, that is either not in the chain of natural cause and effect, or which acts on the chain of cause and effect in nature from without the chain.

Thus if any event transpires in the bosom or upon the plat-

form of what is called nature, which is not from nature itself, or is varied from the process nature would execute by her own laws, that is supernatural, by whatever power it is wrought. Suppose, for example (which we cite for illustration's sake, even though it cannot be), that there were another system of nature incommunicably separate from ours, some "famous continent of universe" like that on which Bunyan stumbled, "as he walked through many regions and countries;" if, then, this other universe were swung up side by side with ours great disturbance would result, and the disturbance would be to us supernatural, because from without our system of nature; for though the laws of our system are acting, still in the disturbance they are not, by the supposition, acting in their own system or conditions, but by an action that is varied by the forces and reciprocal actings of the other. So if the processes, combinations, and results of our system of nature are interrupted or varied by the action, whether of God or angels or men, so as to bring to pass what would not come to pass in it by its own internal action under the laws of mere cause and effect, the variations are in like manner supernatural. And exactly this we expect to show, namely, that God has, in fact, erected another and higher system, that of spiritual being and government, for which nature exists; a system not under the law of cause and effect, but ruled and marshaled under other kinds of laws, and able continually to act upon or vary the action of the processes of nature. If, accordingly, we speak of system, this spiritual realm or department is much more properly called a system than the natural, because it is closer to God, higher in its consequence, and contains in itself the ends or final causes for which the other exists, and to which the other is made to be subservient. There is, however, a constant action and reaction between the two, and, strictly speaking, they are both together taken as one, the true system of

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God; for a system, in the most proper and philosophic sense of the word, is a complete and absolute whole, which cannot be taken as a part or fraction of any thing.

We do not mean, of course, by these definitions or distinctions of the natural and supernatural to assume the impropriety of the great multitude of expressions in which these words are more loosely employed. They may well enough be so employed. The convenience of speech requires it, but it is only the more necessary on that account that we thoroughly understand ourselves when we use them in this manner.

Thus we sometimes speak of "the system of nature," using the word nature in a loose and general way as comprising all created existence. But if we accommodate ourselves in this manner, it behooves us to see that we do not, in using such a term, slide into a false philosophy which overturns all obligation by assuming the real universality of cause and effect, and the subjection of human actions to that law. It may be true that men are only things, determinable under the same conditions of causality, but it will be soon enough to assert that fact when it is ascertained by particular inquiry, which inquiry is much more likely to result in the impression that the phrase "system of nature," understood in this manner as implying that human actions are determined by mechanical laws, is much as if one were to speak of the "system of the school-house," as supporting the inference that the same kind of framework that holds the timbers together is also to mortise and pin fast the moral order of the school.

In the same manner, we sometimes say "universal nature" when we only catch up the term to denote the whole creation or universe, without deciding any thing in regard to the possible universality of nature properly defined. To this, again, there is no objection if we are only careful not to slide into the opinion that natural laws and causes comprehend every thing,

as multitudes do without thought in simply yielding to the force of such a term.

The word "nature," again, is currently used in our modern literature as the name of a universal power; be it an eternal fate, or an eternal system of matter reigning by its necessary laws, or an eternal God who is the All, and is, in fact, nowise different from a system of matter.

Nature undergoes, in this manner, a kind of literary apotheosis, and receives the mock honors of a *dilettante* worship. And the new nature-religion is the more valued because both the god and the worship, being creatures of the reigning school of letters, are supposed to be of a more superlative and less common quality.

But though something is here said of religion with a religious air, the word *nature*, it will be found, is used in exact accordance still with its rigid and proper meaning, as denoting that which has its fixed laws of coming to pass within itself.

The only abuse consists in the assumed universal extent of nature, by which it becomes a fate, an all-devouring abyss of necessity, in which God and man and all free beings are virtually swallowed up. If it should happen that nature proper has no such extent, but is, instead, a comparatively limited and meager fraction of the true universe, the new religion would appear to have but a very shallow foundation, and to be, in fact, a fraud as pitiful as it is airy and pretentious.

We also speak of a nature *in* free beings, and count upon it as a motive, cause, or ground of certainty in respect to their actions. Thus we assign the nature of God and the nature of man as reasons of choice and roots of character, representing that it is the "nature of God" to be holy, or (it may be) "the nature of man to do wrong." Nor is there any objection to this use of the word "nature" taken as popular language.

There is, doubtless, in God, as a free intelligence, a consti-

tution having fixed laws, answering exactly to our definition of nature. That there is a proper and true nature in man we certainly know, for all the laws of thought, memory, association, feeling in the human soul are as fixed as the laws of the heavenly bodies. It is only the will that is not under the law of cause and effect, and the other functions are, by their laws, subordinated in a degree to the uses of the will, and its directing sovereignty over their changes and processes.

And yet the will, calling these others a nature, is in turn solicited and drawn by them, just as the expressions alluded to imply, save that they have, in fact, no conservative agency on the will at all. They are the will's reasons—that in view of which it acts; so that with a given nature it may be expected, with a certain qualified degree of confidence, to act thus or thus; but they are never causes on the will, and the choices of the will are never their effects. Therefore, when we say that it is "the nature of man" to do this, the language is to be understood in a secondary, tropical sense, and not as when we say that it is the nature of fire to burn or of water to freeze.

As little would I be understood to insist that the term supernatural is always to be used in the exact sense I have given it. Had the word been commonly used in this close, sharply defined meaning, much of our present unbelief or misbelief would have been obviated; for these aberrations result universally from our use of this word in a manner so indefinite and so little intelligent.

Instead of regarding the supernatural as that which acts on the chain of cause and effect in nature from without the chain, and adhering to that sense of the term, we use it very commonly in a kind of ghostly, marvelous sense, as if relating to some apparition or visional wonder; or, it may be, to some desultory, unsystematizable action, whether of angels or of God. Such uses of the word are permissible enough by dictionary

laws, but they make the word an offense to all who are any way inclined to the rationalizing habit.

On the other hand, there are many who claim to be acknowledged as adherents of a supernatural faith with as little definite understanding. Believing in a God superior to nature, acting from behind and *through her laws*, they suppose that they are, of course, to be classed as believers in a supernatural being and religion. But the genuine supernaturalism of Christianity signifies a great deal more than this; namely, that God is acting from without on the lines of cause and effect in our fallen world and our disordered humanity, to produce what by no mere laws of nature will ever come to pass. Christianity, therefore, is supernatural, not because it acts through the laws of nature, limited by and doing the work of the laws, but because it acts regeneratively and new-creatively to repair the damage which laws, in their penal action, would otherwise perpetuate. Its very distinction as a redemptive agency lies in the fact that it enters into nature in this regenerative and rigidly supernatural way to reverse and restore the lapsed condition of sinners.

NOTE C. (See page 109.)

SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY TO THE CHRIST.

THIS testimony of God by the prophets, which according to a precept of Jesus forms among Christians a familiar theme, could not be fully adduced and adequately illustrated in many volumes. But, like the proofs of the inspiration of the prophets, a simple parallelism, without a word of explanation, may suffice to show that the testimony is abundant, that the harmony is complete, and that both the Father and the Spirit have borne witness of Jesus as the Christ.

PREDICTIVE—O. T.

In thee (Abraham) shall all families of the earth be blessed. *Gen.* xii, 3. In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. *Gen.* xxii, 18; xxviii, 14.

And the Lord appeared unto him (Isaac) and said, I will perform the oath which I swear unto Abraham thy father; and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed. *Gen.* xxvi, 2-4.

As for Ishmael, I have heard thee; but my covenant will I establish with Isaac. *Gen.* xvii, 20, 21.

I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; and in

CONFIRMATIVE—N. T.

The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, . . . the son of Abraham. *Matt.* i, 1. Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which God made with our fathers, saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the kindreds of the earth be blessed. *Acts* iii, 25.

God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled to lay hold upon the hope set before us, even Jesus. *Heb.* vi, 17, 18, 20.

Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. *Rom.* ix, 7.

Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the covenants, and the promises: whose are the fathers, and of whom, as

PREDICTIVE—O. T.

thee (Jacob) and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed. *Gen. xxviii, 13, 14.*

Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: the scepter shall not depart from Judah until Shiloh come. *Gen. xlix, 8, 10.* The genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright: for Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler. *1 Chron. v, 1, 2.*

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me (Moses); unto him ye shall hearken. *Deut. xviii, 15.*

There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. There shall be a root of Jesse, etc. *Isa. xi, 1, 10.*

I have sworn unto David my servant, Thy seed will I establish for ever. *Psa. lxxxix, 3, 4, etc.* I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, etc. *Jer. xxiii, 5; xxxiii, 15.*

It (the woman's seed) shall bruise thy (the serpent's) head. *Gen. iii, 15.*

The Lord hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man. *Jer. xxxi, 22.*

CONFIRMATIVE—N. T.

concerning the flesh, Christ came. *Rom. ix, 4, 5.*

It is evident that our Lord sprang out of Judah. *Heb. vii, 14.* Salvation is of the Jews. *John iv, 22.* The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book. *Rev. v, 5.*

A great prophet is risen up among us; God hath visited his people. *Luke vii, 16.* This is of a truth that Prophet that should come into the world. *John vi, 14.*

Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles. *Rom. xv, 12; Matt. i, 5, 16.* To David also he gave testimony, and said, I have found David the son of Jesse, a man which shall fulfill all my will. *Acts xiii, 22.*

Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Saviour, Jesus. *Acts xiii, 23; ii, 30; Luke i, 32.*

When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, etc. *Gal. iv, 4.*

Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of

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Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. *Isa.* vii, 14.

Thou, Beth-lehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting. *Micah* v, 2. He shall be called, The Lord (*Jehovah*) our Righteousness. *Jer.* xxiii, 6.

Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father (or the Father of the everlasting age), The Prince of Peace. *Isa.* ix, 6.

I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. *Psa.* ii, 7.

Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts. *Zech.* xiii, 7.

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the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore . . . that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. *Luke* i, 34, 35.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which, being interpreted, is God with us. *Matt.* i, 22, 23.

Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea in the days of Herod the king, etc. *Matt.* ii, 1; *Luke* ii, 11.

In the beginning was the Word: The same was in the beginning with God. *John* i, 1, 2. Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. *Heb.* xiii, 8.

The Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. *John* i, 1, 14. Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. *Luke* ii, 11.

We beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. *John* i, 14. He shall be called the Son of the Highest. *Luke* i, 32.

Who (Christ Jesus), being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but was made in the likeness of men. *Phil.* ii, 6, 7. Great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh. *1 Tim.* iii, 16.

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In the days of these kings (or empires, of which the Roman was the last) shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom. *Dan.* ii, 44.

The Desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of Hosts. *Hag.* ii, 7.

I will raise them up a Prophet, and will put my words in his mouth. *Deut.* xviii, 18.

And he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. *Deut.* xviii, 18.

Lo, I come: in the volume of the book *it is* written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart. *Psa.* xl, 7, 8.

Who hath believed our report [*Heb. hearing, or doctrine*], and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? He is rejected of men. *Isa.* liii, 1, 3.

For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, *there is* no beauty that we should desire him. *Isa.* liii, 2.

He (my messenger)

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In those days came John the Baptist, saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. *Matt.* iii, 1, 2. The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard-seed, which, when it is grown, is the greatest among herbs. *Matt.* xiii, 31, 32.

And he (Simeon) came...into the temple: and when the parents brought in the child Jesus, he blessed God, and said, Mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people. *Luke* ii, 27, 28, 30, 31.

Jesus answered them and said, My doctrine is not mine, but his that sent me. *John* vii, 16. He whom God hath sent (the Christ) speaketh the words of God. *John* iii, 34.

For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say, and what I should speak. *John* xii, 49. All things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you. *John* xv, 15.

I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. *John* vi, 38. Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. *John* iv, 34.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not. *John* i, 11. Though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him. *John* xii, 37.

He hath regarded the low estate of his hand-maiden: he hath exalted them of low degree. *Luke* i, 48, 52. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger. *Luke* ii, 11, 12. Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary? And they were offended at him. *Mark* vi, 3.

Jesus went away again beyond Jordan into

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shall prepare the way before me. *Mal.* iii, 1. He shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers. *Mal.* iv, 6. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. *Isa.* xl, 3.

Behold my servant whom I uphold;
Mine elect, *in whom* my
soul delighteth;

I have put my Spirit
upon him. *Isa.* xlii, 1.

The Spirit of the Lord
shall rest upon him. *Isa.*
xi, 2.

The rulers take counsel
together against the Lord,
and against his Anointed. *Psa.* ii, 2. I have
ordained a lamp for mine
anointed. *Psa.* cxxxii, 17.

To anoint the Most
Holy: the Messiah, the
Prince. *Dan.* ix, 24, 25.

God, thy God, hath
anointed thee with the
oil of gladness above thy
fellows. *Psa.* xlv, 7.

The Spirit of the Lord
God is upon me; because
the Lord hath anointed
me

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the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode. And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true. And many believed on him there. *John* x, 34, 40, 42.

He took upon him the form of a *servant*. *Phil.*
ii, 7.

Lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my
beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.
Matt. iii, 17.

The heavens were opened unto him, and he
saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove,
and lighting upon him. *Matt.* iii, 16.

He whom God hath sent speaketh the words
of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by
measure unto him. *John* iii, 34.

We have found the Messiah, which is, being
interpreted, the Christ (or the anointed). *John*
i, 41. I know that Messiah cometh, which is
called Christ. This is indeed the Christ, the
Saviour of the world. *John* iv, 25, 42.

Of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus,
whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and
Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the
people of Israel, were gathered together, for
to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel
determined before to be done. *Acts* iv, 27, 28.

There was delivered unto him the book of
the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened
the book, he found the place where it was
written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, be-
cause he hath anointed me to preach the gos-
pel to the poor, etc. And he began to say unto
them, This day is this Scripture fulfilled in your
ears. *Luke* iv, 17-21.

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To *preach* good tidings
unto the meek;

He hath sent me to bind
up the broken-hearted,

To proclaim liberty to
the captives, and the
opening of the prison to
them that are bound;
To proclaim the accept-
able year of the Lord,

And the day of ven-
geance of our God;

To comfort all that
mourn;

To appoint unto them
that mourn in Zion, to
give unto them beauty
for ashes, the oil of joy
for mourning, the gar-
ment of praise for the
spirit of heaviness. *Isa.*
lxi, 1, 2, 3.

The Spirit of the Lord
shall rest upon him, the
spirit of wisdom and un-
derstanding, the spirit of
counsel and might, the
spirit of knowledge, and
of the fear of the Lord;
And shall make him of
quick understanding, in
the fear of the Lord;

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The poor have the gospel (good tidings)
preached to them. *Matt. xi, 5.* He went
throughout every city and village, preaching
and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom
of God. *Luke viii, 1.*

Come unto me, all ye that labor and are
heavy laden, and I will give you rest. *Matt.*
xi, 28.

Whosoever committeth sin is the [*δουλος*,
slave] servant of sin. If the Son therefore shall
make you free, ye shall be free indeed. *John viii,*
34, 36.

If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in
this thy day, the things which belong unto thy
peace! *Luke xix, 42.* Behold, now is the ac-
cepted time. *2 Cor. vi, 2.*

For the days shall come upon thee (Jerusa-
lem), that thine enemies shall lay thee even
with the ground, because thou knewest not
the time of thy visitation. *Luke xix, 43, 44.*
For these be the days of vengeance, that all
things which are written may be fulfilled.
Luke xxi, 22.

Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall
be comforted. *Matt. v, 4.*

Blessed are ye, when *men* shall persecute you,
etc. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great
is your reward in heaven. Vers. 11, 12. I am
exceeding joyful in all our tribulation. *2 Cor.*
vii, 4. We glory in tribulations also. *Rom. v, 3.*

He knew what was in man. *John vi, 25.* All
that heard him were astonished at his under-
standing and answers. *Luke ii, 47.* Christ the
power of God, and the wisdom of God. *1 Cor.*
i, 24.

No man was able to answer him a word,
neither durst any *man* ask him any more *ques-*
tions. *Matt. xxii, 46; Mark xii, 34.*

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And he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes,

Neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. *Isa.* xi, 2, 3.

He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.

A bruised reed shall he not break,

And the smoking [or dimly burning] flax shall he not quench. *Isa.* xlii, 2, 3.

Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. *Isa.* lv, 1.

Wherefore do ye spend money for *that which is not bread*? and your labor for *that which satis-*

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When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee. *John* i, 48. This poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury. *Mark* xii, 43. Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment. *John* vii, 24.

And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts. *Matt.* xi, 4. He that dippeth *his* hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me. *Matt.* xxvi, 23.

His brethren said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. Then went he up unto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. *John* vii, 3-10.

A woman, which was a sinner, stood at his feet behind *him* weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe *them* with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed *them* with the ointment. And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. *Luke* vii, 37, 38, 48, 50.

Mary sat at Jesus's feet, and heard his word. But Martha came to him, and said, Lord, bid her that she help me. And Jesus answered, But one thing is needful: and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. *Luke* x, 39, 40, 42. Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. *John* vi, 37.

Blessed *are* they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled. *Matt.* v, 6. Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst, etc. *John* iv, 14. In the last day, that great *day* of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. *John* vii, 37.

Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. *John* vi, 27. I am the living bread

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fieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye *that which is* good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. *Isa.* lv, 2.

Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David. *Ibid.* lv, 3.

Behold, I have given him *for* a witness to the people. *Isa.* lv, 4.

Thou art fairer than the children of men. *Psa.* xlv, 2.

Grace is poured into thy lips. *Ibid.*

Thou lovest righteousness,

And hatest iniquity. *Psa.* xlv, 7.

He had done no violence,

Neither *was any* deceit in his mouth. *Isa.* liii, 9.

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which came down from heaven. Ver. 51. The words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit and they are life. Ver. 63.

Let these sayings sink down into your ears. *Luke* ix, 44. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, etc. *John* x, 27, 28.

For this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. *John* xviii, 37.

And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. *Matt.* xvii, 2.

All wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. *Luke* iv, 22. Of his fullness have all we received, and grace for grace. Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. *John* i, 16, 17.

My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. *John* iv, 34. Whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. *Matt.* xii, 50.

He turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men. *Matt.* xvi, 23. Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you. Depart from me, ye that work iniquity. *Matt.* vii, 23.

Then said Pilate, I find no fault in this man. *Luke* xxiii, 4. Judas [said], I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood. *Matt.* xxvii, 4. Such a high priest became us, *who is* holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. *Heb.* vii, 26.

Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: who, when he was reviled, reviled

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I will set up one Shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. *Ezek.* xxxiv, 23. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd. *Isa.* xl, 11.

And David my servant shall be king over them; and they all shall have one shepherd. *Ezek.* xxxvii, 24.

He shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. *Isa.* xl, 11.

Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. *Psa.* cxviii, 26.

Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass; and upon a colt the foal of an ass. *Zech.* ix, 9.

The Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the Messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts. *Mal.* iii, 1.

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not again; when he suffered, he threatened not. *1 Pet.* ii, 22, 23.

I am the good shepherd. By me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. *John* x, 9, 11, 14. He calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him, etc. *Ibid.*, vers. 3, 4. Our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep. *Heb.* xiii, 20; *1 Pet.* ii, 25.

There shall be one fold, and one shepherd. *John* x, 16.

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not. He took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them. *Mark* x, 14, 16. Feed my lambs. *John* xxi, 15.

And a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees, and strewed them in the way. And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest. *Matt.* xxi, 8, 9. Blessed be the kingdom of our father David. *Mark* xi, 10. Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. *Mark* xi, 9. And the disciples brought the ass, and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and they set him thereon. *Matt.* xxi, 6, 7.

And Jesus entered into Jerusalem, and into the temple. *Mark* xi, 11. And he taught daily in the temple. *Luke* xix, 47.

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The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up. *Psa.* lxix, 9. He is like a refiner's fire: he shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver. *Mal.* iii, 2, 3.

The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing. *Isa.* xxxv, 5, 6. In that day shall the deaf hear the words of the book, and the eyes of the blind shall see out of obscurity, and out of darkness. *Isa.* xxix, 18.

It (the seed of the woman) shall bruise thy (the serpent's) head,

And thou shalt bruise his heel. *Gen.* iii, 15.

The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back. I gave my back to the smiters, etc. *Isa.* l, 5, 6.

For the Lord God will help me;
Therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore

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And Jesus went into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers, and the seats of them that sold doves. *Matt.* xxi, 12. When he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple. *John* ii, 15.

Go and show John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up. *Matt.* xi, 5. And Jesus went about all Galilee, healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among the people. *Matt.* iv, 23. And great multitudes came unto him, having with them *those that were* lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus's feet, and he healed them; insomuch that the multitude wondered, when they saw the dumb to speak, the maimed to be whole, the lame to walk, and the blind to see. *Matt.* xv, 30, 31.

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. 1 *John* iii, 8. Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. *Heb.* ii, 14. And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. *Rom.* xvi, 20.

Jesus went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. They went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? If ye seek me, let these go their way, etc. *John* xviii, 4-8. No man taketh it (my life) from me, but I lay it down of myself, etc. *John* x, 18.

And there appeared an angel from heaven, strengthening him. *Matt.* xxii, 43.

Then he said unto them, Behold, we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by

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have I set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. *Isa.* 1, 7.

Smite the Shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered. *Zech.* xiii, 7. And I will turn mine hand upon the little ones. *Ibid.*

He was oppressed and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. *Isa.* liii, 7.

He is despised and rejected: he was despised, and we esteemed him not. *Isa.* liii, 3. Thus saith the Lord, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth. *Isa.* xlix, 7.

They weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver;—a goodly price that I was prized at of them. *Zech.* xi, 12, 13.

And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter;—and I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them to the potter in the house of the Lord. *Zech.* xi, 13.

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the prophets concerning the Son of man shall be accomplished. *Luke* xviii, 31.

O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done. *Matt.* xxvi, 42, 44; *Luke* xxii, 42.

Judas came, and with him a great multitude with swords and staves, etc. All the disciples forsook him and fled. *Matt.* xxvi, 47, 56.

Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. *Luke* xii, 32.

When he was accused, he answered nothing. Then said Pilate unto him, Hearst thou not how many things they witness against thee? And he answered him never a word. *Matt.* xxvii, 12–14. He held his peace, and answered nothing. *Mark* xiv, 61; *John* xix, 9.

Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil? *John* viii, 48. And he (Pilate) saith unto the Jews, Behold your King! But they cried out, Away with him, away with him, crucify him. *John* xix, 14, 15.

And he said unto them, What will ye give me, and I will deliver him unto you? And they covenanted with him for thirty pieces of silver. *Matt.* xxvi, 15.

Then Judas, which had betrayed him, repented himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. And he cast down the pieces of silver in the temple. And the chief priests took the silver pieces, and said, It is not lawful for to put them into the treasury, because it is the price of blood. And they took counsel, and bought with them the potter's field, to bury strangers in. *Matt.* xxvii, 3, 5, 6, 7.

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When we shall see him,
there is no beauty that
we should desire him.
Isa. liii, 2.

He is rejected of men;
—we hid as it were our
faces from him. *Ibid.*,
ver. 3.

The stone which the
builders refused is be-
come the head *stone* of
the corner. *Psa.* cxviii,
22.

He was taken from
prison and from judg-
ment: he was cut off out
of the land of the living.
Isa. liii, 8.

I gave my back to the
smite, and my cheeks to
them that plucked off the
hair:

I hid not my face from
shame and spitting. *Isa.*
l, 6.

Many bulls have com-
passed me: strong bulls
of Bashan have beset me
round. They gaped up-
on me with their mouths
(margin, opened their
mouths against me), as a
ravening and a roaring

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Then came Jesus forth, wearing the crown of
thorns, and the purple robe. And Pilate saith
unto them, Behold the man! *John* xix, 5.

When the chief priests therefore and of-
ficers saw him, they cried out, saying, Crucify
him, crucify him. Away with him, away with
him, crucify him. *John* xix, 6, 15. They had
then a notable prisoner called Barabbas. The
governor said unto them, Whether of the twain
will ye that I release unto you? They said,
Barabbas. *Matt.* xxvii, 16, 21.

Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-
stone. *Eph.* ii, 20.

Saith Pilate unto him, Knowest thou not that
I have power to crucify thee? Pilate brought
Jesus forth, and sat down in the judgment seat,
etc. Then delivered he him unto them to be
crucified. And they took Jesus, and led him
away. *John* xix, 10, 13, 16.

Pilate took Jesus, and scourged him. And
the soldiers platted a crown of thorns, and put
it on his head. And they smote him with their
hands. *John* xix, 1, 2, 3. They buffeted him, and
others smote him with the palms of their
hands. *Matt.* xxvi, 67.

And some began to spit on him, and to cov-
er his face, and to buffet him. *Mark* xiv, 65.

They bowed the knee before him, and mocked
him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! And
they spit upon him, and took the reed, and
smote him on the head. *Matt.* xxvii, 29, 30.

They led him away where the scribes and
the elders were assembled. They smote him,
saying, Prophecy unto us, thou Christ, Who
is he that smote thee? *Matt.* xxvi, 57, 67, 68.

The soldiers of the governor took Jesus into
the common hall, and gathered unto him the
whole band *of soldiers*. And they stripped him,
and put on him a scarlet robe. And when they

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lion. Thou hast brought me into the dust of death. For dogs have compassed me; the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me. *Psa.* xxii, 12, 13, 15, 16.

O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass. *Zech.* ix, 9. Shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself. *Dan.* ix, 26.

They part my garments among them,

And cast lots upon my vesture. *Psa.* xxii, 18.

They pierced my hands and my feet. *Psa.* xxii, 16.

He was numbered with the transgressors. *Isa.* liii, 12.

They gave me also gall for my meat;

And in my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink. *Psa.* lxix, 21.

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had platted a crown of thorns, they put it upon his head, and a reed in his right hand: and they bowed the knee before him, and mocked him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! *Matt.* xxvii, 27, 28, 29.

Fear not, daughter of Sion: behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt. *John* xii, 15.

And Pilate wrote a title, and put it on the cross. And the writing was, JESUS OF NAZARETH THE KING OF THE JEWS. *John* xix, 19.

Then the soldiers, when they had crucified Jesus, took his garments, and made four parts, to every soldier a part; and also his coat: now the coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout. They said therefore among themselves, Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, whose it shall be: that the Scripture might be fulfilled. *John* xix, 23, 24.

They crucified him. *John* xix, 18. Behold my hands and my feet. *Luke* xxiv, 39. Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side. *John* xx, 27.

A friend of publicans and sinners. *Matt.* xi, 19. Then were two thieves crucified with him; one on the right hand, and another on the left. *Matt.* xxvii, 38.

And when they were come unto a place called Golgotha, they give him vinegar to drink mingled with gall: and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink. *Matt.* xxvii, 33, 34.

After this, Jesus knowing that all things were now accomplished, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, saith, I thirst. Now there was set a vessel full of vinegar; and they filled a sponge with vinegar, and put it upon hyssop, and put it to his mouth. When Jesus, there-

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All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, He trusted on the Lord that he would deliver him: let him deliver him, seeing he delighted in him. *Psa. xxii, 7, 8.*

He keepeth all his bones: not one of them is broken. *Psa. xxxiv, 20.* Neither shall ye break a bone thereof (of the Paschal Lamb). *Exod. xii, 46.*

They shall look upon me whom they have pierced. *Zech. xii, 10.*

He made his grave with the wicked [or his grave was appointed with the wicked],

And with the rich in his death (or with the rich man was his tomb. *Louth's Translation*). *Isa. liii, 9.*

A man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief. *Isa. liii, 3.*

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fore, had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished. *John xix, 28, 30.*

And they that passed by railed on him, wagging their heads, and saying, Ah! thou that destroyest the temple, and buildest it in three days, save thyself and come down from the cross. *Mark xv, 29, 30.* The soldiers also mocked him, saying, If thou be the King of the Jews, save thyself. *Luke xxiii, 36, 37.* Likewise also the chief priests: If he be the King of Israel, let him now come down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him: for he said, I am the Son of God. *Matt. xxvii, 41, 42, 43.*

The Jews therefore, because it was the preparation, besought Pilate that their legs might be broken, and that they might be taken away. Then came the soldiers, and brake the legs of the first, and of the other which was crucified with him. But when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they brake not his legs. *John xix, 31-33.*

But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, etc. *John xix, 34.*

Then were there two thieves crucified with him. *Matt. xxvii, 38.*

When the even was come, a rich man of Arimathea, named Joseph, went to Pilate and begged the body of Jesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be delivered. And when Joseph had taken the body, he wrapped it in a clean linen cloth, and laid it in his own new tomb. *Matt. xxvii, 57, 58, 60.*

Being grieved for the hardness of their hearts. *Mark iii, 5.* He groaned in spirit, and was troubled. Jesus wept. *John xi, 33, 35.* He beheld the city, and wept over it. *Luke xix, 41.* From that time began Jesus to show . . . he must suffer many things, and be killed. *Matt. xvi, 21.*

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We did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. *Isa.* liii, 4.

Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. *Isa.* liii, 10.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *Psa.* xxii, 1.

He was cut off out of the land of the living. *Isa.* liii, 8.

My flesh also shall rest in hope. For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption. *Psa.* xvi, 9, 10.

When thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall prolong his days. *Isa.* liii, 10.

Thou hast ascended on high,

Thou hast received gifts for men;

Yea, for the rebellious also;

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Being in an agony, his sweat was as it were great drops of blood. *Luke* xxii, 44.

Christ redeemed us, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. *Gal.* iii, 13.

Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour. *John* xii, 27. My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. *Matt.* xxvi, 38.

My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? *Matt.* xxvii, 46; *Mark* xv, 34.

He bowed his head and gave up the ghost. *John* xix, 30.

He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs. *Acts* i, 3. He (David) spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left in hell (hades, the state of the dead), neither his flesh did see corruption. *Acts* ii, 31. He rose again the third day, according to the Scriptures. *1 Cor.* xv, 4.

He was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. *Luke* xxiv, 51. While they beheld, he was taken up. *Acts* i, 9. After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. *Mark* xvi, 19.

My peace I give unto you. *John* xiv, 27. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. *John* xvi, 7. Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. *John* xvii, 2.

While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. *Rom.* v, 8. He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? *Rom.* viii, 32.

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That the Lord God might dwell among them. *Psa.* lxxviii, 18.

He made intercession for the transgressors. *Isa.* liii, 12.

The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest forever. *Psa.* cx, 4. He shall be a priest upon his throne. *Zech.* vi, 13.

After the order of Melchizedek [king of righteousness]. *Psa.* cx, 4.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He shall bear their iniquities. He bare the sin of many. *Isa.* liii, 6, 11, 12.

Thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin. *Ver.* 10.

Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression,

To make an end of sins,

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If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. *John* xiv, 23.

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. *Luke* xxiii, 34. He ever liveth to make intercession for them. *Heb.* vii, 25.

We have a great high-priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God. *Heb.* iv, 14. This man, because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. *Heb.* vii, 24.

After the similitude of Melchisedec there ariseth another priest, who is made, not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. Such a high-priest became us. *Heb.* vii, 15, 16, 26.

For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God. *Rom.* iii, 23. Death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. *Rom.* v, 12. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures. *1 Cor.* xv, 3. Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness: by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray: but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls. *1 Pet.* ii, 24, 25.

Christ hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God. *Eph.* i, 2. Now hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. *Heb.* ix, 26.

When the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, to redeem them that were under the law. *Gal.* iv, 4, 5. For this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance. *Heb.* ix, 15.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. *John* i, 29. The blood of

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To make reconciliation
for iniquity,

And to bring in everlasting
righteousness. *Dan.*
ix, 24.

When thou shalt make
his soul an offering for
sin, he shall see *his* seed,
he shall prolong *his* days,
and the pleasure of the
Lord shall prosper in
his hand. . . . There-
fore will I divide him a
portion with the great,
and he shall divide the
spoil with the strong, be-
cause he hath poured out
his soul unto death. *Isa.*
liii, 10, 12.

I will make him my
first-born, higher than
the kings of the earth.
Psa. lxxxix, 27.

I will pour water upon
him that is thirsty, and
floods upon the dry
ground: I will pour my
Spirit upon thy seed,

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Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin.
1 John i, 7.

All things *are* of God, who hath reconciled
us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given
to us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit,
that God was in Christ, reconciling the world
unto himself, not imputing their trespasses
unto them; and hath committed unto us the
word of reconciliation. *2 Cor.* v, 18, 19. You
that were sometime alienated and enemies in
your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he
reconciled in the body of his flesh through
death, etc. *Col.* i, 21, 22.

To present you holy and unblamable, and
unreprovable in his sight. *Col.* i, 22. For
this purpose the Son of God was manifested,
that he might destroy the works of the devil.
Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin.
1 John iii, 8, 9. Every one that doeth right-
eousness is born of him. *1 John* ii, 29.

He became obedient unto death, even the
death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly
exalted him, and given him a name above every
name, etc. *Phil.* ii, 8, 9. We see Jesus, who
was made a little lower than the angels for the
suffering of death, crowned with glory and
honor, etc. *Heb.* ii, 9. Jesus the author and
finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was
set before him endured the cross, despising the
shame, and is set down at the right hand of the
throne of God. *Heb.* xii, 2.

Who is the blessed and only Potentate, the
King of kings, and Lord of lords. *1 Tim.*
vi, 15. Jesus Christ, who is the Prince of the
kings of the earth. *Rev.* i, 5.

In the last day, that great day of the feast,
Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst,
let him come unto me, and drink. He that
believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out
of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.

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and my blessing upon thine offspring: and they shall spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water-courses. *Isa.* xlv, 3, 4. Living waters shall go out from Jerusalem. *Zech.* xiv, 8.

As for me, this *is* my covenant with them, saith the Lord; My Spirit that *is* upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever. *Isa.* lix, 20, 21.

Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord); but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and

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(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet *given*, because that Jesus was not yet glorified.) *John* vii, 37-39. Behold I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. *Luke* xxiv, 49.

I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him, etc. *John* xiv, 16, 17. He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. *Ibid.* 26.

Now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first *covenant* had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant, etc. In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. *Heb.* viii, 6, 7, 8, 13. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope *did*. By so much was Jesus made a surety of a better testament. *Heb.* vii, 19, 22. *Ye are* manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. *2 Cor.* iii, 3.

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will be their God, and they shall be my people. *Jer.* xxxi, 31-33.

It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel; I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth. *Isa.* xlix, 6. There shall be a root of Jesse; to it shall the Gentiles seek. *Ibid.* xi, 10. I will give thee for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles. *Ibid.* xlii, 6, 7. The Gentiles shall come to thy light. *Ibid.* lx, 3.

I have spread out my hands all the day unto a rebellious people, etc. *Isa.* lxxv, 2.

I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not; I said, Behold me, behold me, to a nation that was not called by my name. *Isa.* lxxv, 1. Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth. *Isa.* xlv, 22.

The people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city,

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And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. *Mark* xvi, 15. A light to lighten the Gentiles. *Luke* ii, 32. All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations. *Matt.* xxviii, 18, 19. The Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. *Acts* xxvi, 17, 18. Ye were sometime darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. *Eph.* v, 8.

Paul and Barnabas waxed bold, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken to you: but seeing ye put it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles. *Acts* xiii, 46.

And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed. *Acts* xiii, 48. Be it known therefore unto you (the Jews), that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it. *Acts* xxviii, 28.

He sent forth his armies and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city. *Matt.* xxii, 7. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, etc., behold your house is left unto you desolate. *Matt.* xxiii, 37, 38.

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And the sanctuary;

And the end thereof shall be with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. *Dan.* ix, 26.

And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week. *Ibid.* 27.

And in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and oblation to cease. *Ver.* 27. Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will: . . . yea, thy law is within my heart. *Psa.* xl, 6-8.

For the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the deso-

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There shall not be left here [of the temple] one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. *Matt.* xxiv, 2.

Ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars: but the end is not yet. *Ver.* 6. Then shall be great tribulation, etc. *Ver.* 21.

He went throughout every city and village, preaching and showing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. *Luke* viii, 1. I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel. *Matt.* xv, 24. Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. *Luke* xxiv, 46, 47. They that gladly received his [Peter's] word, were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved. *Acts* ii, 41, 47.

Sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings thou wouldest not. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. After he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God; by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. *Heb.* x, 8, 9, 12, 14.

When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place, then let them which be in Judea flee into the mountains. *Matt.* xxiv, 15, 16. Thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep

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late. *Dan.* ix, 27. They shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily sacrifice, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate. *Dan.* xi, 31.

The people that do know their God shall be strong and do exploits. *Dan.* xi, 32. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many. *Dan.* xi, 33.

Yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. *Dan.* xi, 33.

Some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge them, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed.

And the king shall do according to his will; and he shall exalt himself above every god, and shall speak marvelous things against the God of gods, and shall prosper till the indignation be accomplished: for that that is determined shall be done. He shall mag-

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thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation. *Luke* xix, 43, 44.

It is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom. *Matt.* xiii, 11; *Mark* iv, 11. They went forth and preached every-where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. *Mark* xvi, 20. Long time abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. *Acts* xiv, 3. Many which heard the word believed. *Acts* iv, 4.

Then shall they deliver you to be afflicted, and shall kill you: and ye shall be hated of all nations for my name's sake. *Matt.* xxiv, 9. For I think that God hath set forth us the apostles last, as it were appointed to death. *1 Cor.* iv, 9. We despaired even of life: we had the sentence of death in ourselves. *2 Cor.* i, 8, 9.

What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. *Rev.* vii, 13, 14.

The day of Christ... shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. *2 Thess.* ii, 2, 3, 4.

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nify himself above all.
Dan. xi, 35-37.

The judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it unto the end. *Dan.* vii, 26.

He shall speak peace unto the heathen. *Zech.* ix, 10.

I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper. And this is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord (Jehovah) our Righteousness. *Jer.* xxiii, 5, 6.

And [he] shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. *Ver.* 5.

In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely. *Ver.* 6. As for thee also, by the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. *Zech.* ix, 11.

The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool. *Psa.* cx, 1.

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is
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Whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming. *2 Thess.* ii, 8.

And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. *Eph.* ii, 17.

Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us righteousness. *1 Cor.* i, 30. The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ. *Rom.* iii, 22. That we might be made the righteousness of God in him. *2 Cor.* v, 21.

A scepter of righteousness is the scepter of thy kingdom. *Heb.* i, 8.

For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord. *Matt.* xxiii, 39. Blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved. *Rom.* xi, 25, 26.

Jesus answered, How say the scribes that Christ is the son of David? For David himself said by the Holy Ghost, The LORD said to my Lord, Sit thou, etc. *Mark* xii, 35, 36. He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. *1 Cor.* xv, 25. From henceforth expecting till his enemies be made his footstool. *Heb.* x, 13. Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began. *Acts* iii, 21.

Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every

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given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. *Isa.* ix, 6.

Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even forever.

Isa. ix, 7.

The kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven, shall be given to the people of the saints of the Most High, whose kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and all dominions shall serve and obey him.

Dan. vii, 27.

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name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of *things* in heaven, and *things* in earth, and *things* under the earth; and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, to the glory of God the Father. *Phil.* ii, 9–11. God set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. *Eph.* i, 20, 21.

Thou shalt . . . bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, etc. *Luke* i, 31–33.

All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. *Matt.* xxviii, 18. I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me. *Luke* xxii, 29. We see not yet all things put under him. *Heb.* ii, 8. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever. *Rev.* xi, 15.

“In searching the Scriptures we see that ‘these are they which testify of Jesus.’ Their testimony, that of God, by whose inspiration they were given, is not a question but a fact. The perfect uniformity and parallelism between the predictions relative to the Messiah and the promised salvation and to the history of Jesus and the doctrine of the Gospel are thus manifest to the sight. Each prediction has its counterpart in the New Testament as exactly fitted to the events and to the doctrine

as those which marked, as in a mold, the desolation of cities and of countries. By those of the latter order the prophets showed what their commission was, and by those of the former how faithfully and fully they discharged it. And as the history of the dispersed of Judah since the crucifixion of Jesus and the fate of the judgment-stricken Babylon, Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, and Palestine give ample verification of the prophetic word, the testimony of the prophets is thus also seen to be so clear and so copious concerning the Messiah that, in the one case as in the other, he that hath ears to hear may hear, and he that hath eyes to see may see."

NOTE D. (See page 141.)

PROPHECIES CONCERNING NATIONS.

I INTRODUCE here a list of prophecies respecting Nations and Peoples, with citations from various authors showing their fulfillment, arranged by Keith in his admirable little treatise styled "Demonstration of the Truth of Christianity."

PROPHECY.

The generation to come of your children that shall rise up after you, and the stranger that shall come from a far land, shall say, when they see the plagues *q*"that land, and the sicknesses which the Lord hath laid upon it: (*Deut.* xxix, 22:)

Wherefore hath the Lord done this unto this land? What meaneth the heat of this great anger? *Ibid.* 24.

I will scatter you among the heathen, and will draw out a sword after you: and your land shall be desolate. Then shall the land enjoy her sabbaths [or rest, or be untilld]. *Lev.* xxvi, 33, 34.

As long as it lieth desolate, and ye be in your enemies' land; even then

FULFILLMENT.

I journeyed in the empire of the Ottomans, and traversed the provinces which formerly were kingdoms of Egypt and Syria. I *wandered over the country*—I enumerated the kingdoms of Damascus and Idumea, of Jerusalem and Samaria. This Syria, now almost depopulated, then contained a hundred flourishing cities, and abounded with towns, villages, and hamlets. What are become of these ages of abundance and of life? etc. *Volney's Ruins*, chap. i, 11, p. 1, 2, 7.

Great God! From whence proceed such melancholy revolutions? For what cause is the fortune of these countries so strikingly changed? Why are so many cities destroyed? Why is not that ancient population reproduced and perpetuated? *Ibid.*, chap. ii, p. 8.

The Jews, as all know, have been scattered among the heathen. Says Volney, "I have traversed this *desolate* country." *Ruins*, chap. ii, p. 7.

Every day I found in my route fields abandoned by the plow. *Ibid.*, chap. i. The art of cultivation is in the most deplorable state. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 413.

Why do these lands no longer boast their former temperature and fertility? Why have these favors been transferred, as it were, *for*

PROPHECY.

FULFILLMENT.

shall the land rest. Ver. 34. The land also shall be left of them, and shall enjoy her sabbaths, [or rest,] while she lieth desolate without them. Ver. 43. They (the Jews on their final return) shall repair the waste cities, the *desolations of many generations*. Isa. lxi, 4.*

so many ages, to other nations and different climes? *Volney's Ruins*, chap. xi, p. 9.

Your land, *strangers* devour it in your presence, and it is desolate, as overthrown by strangers. Isa. i, 7.

Within two thousand five hundred years we may reckon ten invasions which have introduced into Syria a *succession of foreign* nations. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, p. 356.

Destruction upon destruction is cried. Jer. iv, 20. Mischief shall come upon mischief. Ezek. vii, 26. Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. For a nation is come up upon my land, strong and without number, etc. Joel i, 3, 6.

Syria became a province of the Roman empire. In the year 622 (636) the Arabian tribes, collected under the banners of Mohammed, seized, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil wars of the Fatimites and the Omniades, wrested from the Caliphs by their rebellious governors, taken from them by the Turkmen soldiery, invaded by the European crusaders, retaken by the Mamlouks of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks. *Volney's Travels*, p. 357.

I will give it into the hands of the *strangers* for a prey,

Judea has been the scene of frequent invasions, "which have introduced a succession of *foreign* nations." *Ibid.*, p. 356.

And to the wicked of the earth for a *spoil*. Ezek. vii, 21.

When the Ottomans took Syria from the Mamlouks, they considered it only as the *spoil* of a vanquished enemy. According to the law, the life and *property* of the vanquished belong to the conquerors. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 370.

The *robbers* shall enter into it and defile it. Ezek. vii, 22.

The government is far from disapproving a *system of robbery and plunder*. *Ibid.*, p. 381.

Their holy places shall

The holy places were polluted with the

* See also Isa. xxxiii, 15; lvi, 12; Ezek. xxxvi, 24, 25, 33-36; xxxviii, 8; Dan. ix, 27; Hosea iii, 4.

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be defiled. *Ezek.* vii, 24.

Zion shall be plowed over like a field. *Jer.* xxvi, 18; *Micah* iii, 12.

I will bring the land into desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be *astonished* at it. *Lev.* xxvi, 32. Every one that passeth thereby shall be *astonished*. *Jer.* xviii, 16.

Your highways shall be desolate. *Lev.* xxvi, 22.

The way-faring man ceaseth. *Isa.* xxxiii, 8.

I will . . . bring your sanctuaries unto desolation. *Lev.* xxvi, 30, 31.

The palaces shall be forsaken. *Isa.* xxxii, 14.

I will destroy the remnant of the sea-coast. *Ezek.* xxv, 16.

I will make your cities waste. *Lev.* xxvi, 31.

Few men left. *Isa.* xxiv, 6.

I will make the land desolate; yea, more deso-

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monuments of idolatry. *Gibbon's Rome*, vol. iv, p. 100. The mosque of Omar now stands on the site of the temple of Solomon.

After the final destruction of the temple by the arms of Titus and Hadrian a plowshare was drawn over the consecrated ground as a sign of perpetual interdiction. *Gibbon's Rome*. At the time when I visited this sacred spot (Mount Zion) one part of it was undergoing the labor of the plow. *Richardson's Travels*.

So feeble a population in so excellent a country may excite our *astonishment*; but this will be increased if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 366.

In the interior parts of the country there are neither great roads nor canals nor even bridges, etc. The roads in the mountains are extremely bad. It is remarkable that we never see a wagon nor a cart in all Syria. [Except now on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem.—*Editor*.] *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, 417, 419.

Nobody travels alone. Between town and town there are neither posts nor public conveyances, etc. *Ibid.*, p. 418. [See above.]

The temples are thrown down,

The palaces demolished,

The ports filled up,

The towns destroyed,

The earth, *stripped of inhabitants*,

Seems a dreary burying-place.* *Ruins*, chap. ii, p. 8.

* In this single sentence, without the addition or exception of a word, Volney thus clearly and unconsciously shows the fulfillment of no less than six predictions.

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late than the wilderness towards Diblath. *Ezek.* vi, 14.

Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof. *Isa.* xxiv, 1, 2.

The earth is defiled under the inhabitants thereof. *Isa.* xxiv, 5. The worst of the heathen shall possess their houses. *Ezek.* vii, 24.

Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant,

Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate. *Isa.* xxiv, 5, 6.

The vine languisheth. *Ibid.*, xxiv, 7.

The new wine mourneth; they shall not drink wine with a song. *Isa.* xxiv, 7, 9.

Strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it. *Ibid.*

All the merry-hearted do sigh. *Isa.* xxiv, 7. Their shouting shall be

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Syria has undergone *revolutions* which have *confounded* the different races of the inhabitants. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, p. 356.

The barbarism of Syria is complete. *Ibid.*, vol. ii, p. 442.

The pure Gospel of Christ, every-where the herald of civilization and science, is almost as little known in the Holy Land as in California or New Holland. *Dr. Clarke's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 405.

God has, doubtless, pronounced a secret malediction against the earth. *Volney's Ruins*, chap. ii, p. 11.

I wandered over the country and examined the condition of the peasants and nowhere perceived aught but robbery and devastation, misery and wretchedness. *Volney, ibid.*, p. 2.

In the mountains they do not prune the vines, and they nowhere engraft trees. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 335.

Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to a corporal punishment. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, p. 480.

The wines of Jerusalem are most execrable. *Jolliffe's Letters from Palestine*, vol. i, p. 184. The wine drank in Jerusalem is probably the very worst to be met with in any country. *Wilson's Travels*, p. 130.

The Arab (in singing) may be said to excel most in the melancholy strain. To hear his plaintive tones, his sighs, and sobs, it is almost

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no shouting. *Jer.* xlviii, 33.

The mirth of tabrets ceaseth, . . . the joy of the harp ceaseth. *Isa.* xxiv, 8.

The noise of them that rejoice endeth; all joy is darkened; the mirth of the land is gone. *Isa.* xxiv, 8, 11.

Tremble, ye women that are at ease; be troubled, ye careless ones: strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. *Isa.* xxxii, 11.

Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers. *Ibid.*, xxxii, 13.

The forts and towers shall be for dens forever. *Ibid.*, xxxii, 14.

A pasture of flocks. *Ibid.*, xxxii, 14.

Then shall the lambs feed after their manner, and the waste places of the fat ones shall strangers eat. *Isa.* v, 17.

Many houses, great and fair, shall be desolate. *Isa.* v, 9. The defended city shall be desolate, and the habitation forsaken, and left like a wilderness. *Isa.* xxvii, 10.

When the boughs thereof are withered, they shall be broken off: the women come,

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impossible to refrain from tears. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 440.

They (the inhabitants) have no music but vocal, for they neither know nor esteem instrumental. Such instruments as they have are detestable. *Volney's Travels*, p. 439.

They have a serious, nay even sad and melancholy, countenance. They rarely laugh, and the gayety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 476, 461.

In Palestine you may see married women almost uncovered. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 361.

The earth produces only briers and worm-wood. *Volney's Ruins*, p. 9.

At every step we met with ruins of towers, dungeons, and castles with fosses, frequently inhabited by jackals, owls, and scorpions. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 336.

All the parts of Galilee which afford pasture are occupied by Arab tribes, around whose brown tents the sheep and lambs gambol to the sound of the reed, which at night-fall calls them home. *Malte-Brun*, vol. ii, p. 148.

There are innumerable monuments which depose in favor of the great population of high antiquity, such as the prodigious quantity of ruins dispersed over the plains, and even in the mountains, at this day deserted. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 368.

The olive trees (near Arimathea) are daily perishing through age, the ravages of contending factions, and even from secret mischief. The Mamlouks having cut down all the

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and set them on fire. *Isa.* xxvii, 11.

For it is a people of no understanding. *Isa.* xxvii, 11.

Your cities are burned with fire. *Isa.* i, 7.

Many pastors have destroyed my vineyard, they have trodden my portion under foot. *Jer.* xii, 10.

They have made my *pleasant portion* a desolate wilderness, the whole land is made desolate. *Ibid.* xii, 10, 11.

The spoilers are come upon all high places through the wilderness. *Jer.* xii, 12.

No flesh shall have peace. *Jer.* xii, 12.

They have sown wheat, but shall reap thorns: they have put themselves to pain, but shall not profit.

They shall be ashamed of your revenues. *Jer.* xii, 13.

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olive trees for the pleasure they take in destroying, or to make *fires*, Yafa has lost its greatest commerce. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 332, 333.

The most simple arts are in a state of barbarism—the sciences are *totally* unknown. *Ibid.*, p. 442.

A place lately ravaged with *fire* and sword would have *precisely* the appearance of this village (Loud, Lydda). Ramla is in almost as ruinous a state. *Ibid.*, pp. 332, 333.

Like the Turkmen, the Kurds are *pastors and wanderers*. A third wandering people in Syria are the Bedouin Arabs. The Turkmen, the Kurds, and the Bedouins have no fixed habitations, but keep *perpetually wandering*, with their tents and herds. Chap. xxiii of *Volney's Travels* is entitled, *Of the Pastoral, or Wandering Tribes of Syria*. Vol. i, p. 367, etc.

With its numerous advantages of climate and soil, it is not astonishing that Syria should always have been esteemed a *most delicious country*. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, p. 321. I have seen nothing but solitude and desertion. *Volney's Ruins*, p. 7.

These precautions (against robbers) are above all necessary in the countries exposed to the Arabs, such as Palestine, and the whole frontier of the desert. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 417.

War, famine, and pestilence assail them at every turn. *Volney's Ruins*, p. 9.

Man *sows* in anguish, and reaps vexation and care. *Ibid.*, p. 11. They would not be permitted to reap the fruit of their labors. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 435.

The annual sum paid by Syria into the treasury of the Sultan amounts to 2,345 purses.

For Aleppo	800
Tripoli	750
Damascus	45
Acre	750

—2,345 purses
(or £112,135). *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 360.

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Thus saith the Lord God of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and of the land of Israel; They shall eat their *bread* with carefulness, and drink their *water* with astonishment; that her land may be desolate from ALL that is therein, because of the *violence* of all them that dwell therein. *Ezek.* xii, 19.

Ye shall be as a garden that hath no water. *Isa.* i, 30. How long shall the land mourn, and the herbs of every field wither, for the *wickedness* of them that dwell therein? *Jer.* xii, 4.

And the *cities* that are inhabited shall be laid waste; and ye shall know that I am the Lord. *Ezek.* xii, 20.

Among the people, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleaning grapes when the vintage is done. *Isa.* xxiv, 13.

But yet in it shall be a tenth; and it shall return, and shall be eaten: as a teil-tree, and as an oak, whose *substance* is in them, when they cast their leaves. *Isa.* vi, 13.

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The peasants are every-where reduced to a little flat *cake* of barley or dourra, to onions, lentils, and *water*. Dread prevails through the villages. The arbitrary power of the sultan, transmitted to the pasha and to all his sub-delegates, by giving a free course to *extortion*, becomes the mainspring of a *tyranny which circulates through EVERY class*, whilst its effects, by a reciprocal reaction, are *every-where* fatal to agriculture, the arts, commerce, population; in a word, *EVERY THING* which constitutes the power of the state. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 378, 379, 412, 477.

The remains of cisterns are to be found (throughout Judea) in which they collected the rain water, and traces of the canals by which these waters were distributed on the *fields*. *Malte-Brun's Geography*, vol. ii, pp. 150, 151. We here see *none* of that gay carpeting of grass and flowers which decorates the meadows of Normandy and Flanders. The land of Syria has almost always a *dusty appearance*. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 359.

Every day I found in my route villages deserted and *cities* in ruins. *Volney's Ruins*, chap. i.

I looked for the ancient people and their works; and all that I could find was a *faint trace*, like to what the foot of the passenger leaves on the sand. *Volney's Ruins*, chap. ii.

The land of the plains is *FAT and loamy*, and exhibits every sign of the greatest fecundity. Were nature assisted by art, the productions of the most distant countries might be produced within the distance of twenty leagues. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, pp. 308, 317. Galilee would be a paradise were it inhabited by an industrious people, under an enlightened government. *Malte-Brun's Geography*, vol. ii, p. 148.

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The city that went out by a thousand shall leave a hundred. *Amos* v, 3.

I will make SAMARIA as a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard: and . . . pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and . . . discover the foundations thereof. *Micah* i, 6.

O Canaan, the LAND OF THE PHILISTINES, I will even destroy thee: the sea-coast shall be *dwelling*s and cottages for shepherds, and folds for flocks. *Zeph.* ii, 5, 6.

The *remnant* of the Philistines shall perish. *Amos* i, 8.

I will send a fire on the wall of GAZA, which shall devour the palaces thereof. *Ibid.* i, 7.

The king shall perish from Gaza. *Zech.* ix, 5.

Baldness is come upon Gaza. *Jer.* xlvii, 5.

ASHKELON [shall be] a desolation. *Zeph.* ii, 4. Ashkelon shall not be inhabited. *Zech.* ix, 5.

LEBANON is *ashed* and hewn down. *Isa.* xxxiii, 9. Open thy doors, O Lebanon, that the fire may devour thy cedars. *Zech* xi, 1.

[AMMON.] I will stretch

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A tract from which a hundred individuals draw a scanty subsistence formerly maintained *thousands*. *Pierre Belo*, quoted by *Malte-Brun*.

This great city is wholly converted into gardens. *Maundrell's Travels*, p. 78.

The relative distance, local position, and unaltered name of Sebaste leave *no doubt* as to the identity of its site; and its local features are *equally seen* in the threat of Micah. *Buckingham's Travels in Palestine*, pp. 511, 512.

In the plain between Ramla and Gaza (the plain of the Philistines along the sea-coast) the houses are so many huts, sometimes detached, at others ranged in the form of cells around a court-yard, inclosed by a mud wall. In winter they and their *cattle* may be said to live together, the part of the *dwelling* allotted for themselves being only raised two feet above that in which they *lodge their beasts*. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 335. *All the rest* is a desert. *Ibid.*, p. 336.

The *ruins* of white marble sometimes found at Gaza prove that it was formerly the abode of luxury and opulence. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 340.

It is no more than a defenseless village. *Ibid.*, p. 340.

No spot of verdure, not a single blade of grass, did we see upon these *sand hills* (that cover the *ancient Gaza*). *Narrative by Bonar and McChesney*, p. 138.

The deserted ruins of Azkalan. *Ibid.*, p. 338.

Among the crags of the rocks (on Lebanon) may be seen the not very magnificent remains of the boasted cedars. *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 292.

There are but *four or five* of these trees which deserve any notice. *Volney's Travels*, vol. i, p. 292.

All this country, formerly so populous and

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out my hand upon thee.
Ezek. xxv, 7.

I will deliver thee for
a spoil to the heathen.
I will destroy thee. *Ibid.*

I will make Rabbah
[the chief city of the
Ammonites] a stable for
camels, a couching place
for flocks. *Ezek.* xxv, 5.

Rabbah shall be a
desolate heap. *Jer.*
xlix, 2.

[MOAB.] The spoiler
shall come upon every
city, and no city shall
escape. The cities there-
of shall be desolate, with-
out any to dwell therein.
Judgment is come upon
all the cities of the land
of Moab, far or near.
Jer. xlviii, 8, 9, 21, 24.

The days come, saith
the Lord, that I will send
unto him *wanderers*, that
shall *cause him to wander*.
Ibid. xlviii, 12.

O ye that dwell in
Moab, leave the cities, and
dwell in the rock, and be
like the dove that mak-
eth her nest in the sides
of the hole's mouth. *Jer.*
xlviii, 28.

Moab shall be a deris-
ion. *Jer.* xlviii, 26. As
a wandering bird cast
out of the nest, so the

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flourishing, is now changed into a vast desert.
Seetzen's Travels, p. 34.

The far greater part of the country is unin-
habited, being abandoned to the wandering
Arabs. . . . We met numbers of Arabs with
their camels. *Ibid.*, p. 37.

The keepers drive in goats for shelter during
the night. Mr. Buckingham relates that at Am-
mon he "lay down among *flocks* of sheep and
goats, and that he was almost entirely prevented
from sleeping by the *bleating of flocks*." *Trav-
els among the Arab Tribes*, pp. 72, 73.

The buildings exposed to the atmosphere are
all in decay. The plain is *covered* with the re-
mains of private buildings, etc. *Burckhardt's
Travels in Syria*, pp. 359, 360.

"The *ruins* of Eleale, Heshbon, Maan, Dibon,
Aroer, still subsist to illustrate the history of
the Beni Israel." Burckhardt enumerates many
ruined sites within its boundaries. *Travels in
Nubia*, p. 38; *Travels in Syria*, p. 370.

Of Moab Burckhardt writes: "Wherever the
Bedouins [wandering Arabs] are masters of the
cultivators, the latter are soon reduced to *beg-
gary* by their unceasing demands. *Travels in
Syria*, p. 381.

The wretched peasants retire among the rocks
which border on the Dead Sea. *Volney's Trav-
els*, vol. ii, p. 334. There are many families
living in caverns—inhabitants of the rocks.
Seetzen's Travels, p. 26. There are many arti-
ficial caves, . . . in some of which are chambers
and small sleeping apartments. *Captains Irby
and Mangles's Travels*, p. 473.

"In the valley of Wale," bordering on the
Arnon, Burckhardt observed "a large party of
Arabs Shererat encamped. They *wander about
in misery*, the women wearing nothing but a

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daughters of Moab shall be at the fords of Arnon. *Isa.* xvi, 2.

EDOM shall be a desolation. *Jer.* xlix, 17.

I will stretch out mine hand upon Edom; and . . . make it desolate from Teman. *Ezek.* xxv, 13.

I have made Esau BARE. *Jer.* xlix, 10.

Edom shall be a desolate wilderness. *Joel* iii, 19.

He shall stretch out upon it [Idumea] the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. *Isa.* xxxiv, 11.

Son of man, set thy face against mount Seir [Edom], and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. *Ezek.* xxxv, 2, 3.

I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate. *Ezek.* xxxv, 4.

I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return. *Ezek.* xxxv, 9.

I will make thee small among the heathen: thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the

loose shirt hanging in rags about them." *Travels*, pp. 370, 371.

The traces of many towns and villages are met with. At present all this country is a desert,

And Maan (Teman, as marked in the map prefixed to Burckhardt's Travels) is the only inhabited place in it. *Travels*, p. 436.

The whole plain presented to the view an expanse of shifting sands; the depth of sand precludes *all vegetation* of herbage. *Burckhardt's Travels in Syria*, p. 442.

On ascending the western plain, we had before us an immense expanse of dreary country, entirely covered with black flints, with here and there some hilly chain rising from the plain. *Burckhardt's Syria*, p. 444.

It is from the summit of [the mountain] El Nakb that one can judge of the general aspect of the country, of the melancholy and dismal state of which it is difficult to convey an idea with the pencil alone. Many prophets have announced the misery of Idumea, but the strong language of Ezekiel can alone adequately describe this great desolation. *Laborde*.

The following ruined places are situated in Djebel Shera [mount Seir], Kalaab, Djirba, Eyl, Ferdakh, Anyk, Bir-el-Beytar, Shemakh, and Syk. *Ibid.*, pp. 443, 444.

Of the towns laid down in D'Anville's map, Thoana excepted, no traces remain. *Ibid.*

The ruins of the city [of Petra, or the Rock, the capital of Edom] burst on the view in their full grandeur, shut in on the opposite side by barren craggy precipices, from which numer-

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pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the *clefts of the rock*, that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation. *Jer.* xlix, 15, 16, 17.

I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return, and ye *shall know that I am the Lord.* *Ezek.* xxxv, 9.

Every one that goeth by it shall be astonished. *Jer.* xlix, 17.

They shall call them, The border of wickedness. *Mal.* i, 4.

They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. *Isa.* xxxiv, 12.

Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof. *Isa.* xxxiv, 13.

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ous ravines and valleys branch out in all directions; the sides of the mountains, covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs and private dwellings, presented altogether the most singular scene we ever beheld. *Irby and Mangles's Travels*, p. 422. The rocks are hollowed out into innumerable chambers of different dimensions, etc. *Mackmichael's Journey*, p. 228. Some of them are so high, and the side of the mountain is so perpendicular, that it seems impossible to approach the uppermost, etc. *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 422.

I would that the skeptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead; though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the handwriting of God himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him. *Incidents of Travel in Arabia Petra, etc.*, vol. ii, p. 76.

The Arabs in Edom are called "a most savage and treacherous race." *Irby and Mangles*. "They have the reputation," says Burckhardt, "of being very daring thieves." And Pococke describes them as "a very bad people, and notorious robbers." Vol. i, p. 136.

There is not a single human being living near it. *Irby and Mangles's Travels*, p. 439. The sepulchers are numerous and magnificent; and "great," says Burckhardt, "must have been the opulence of a city which could dedicate such monuments to the memory of its rulers." *Travels*, p. 425.

Most of the plants at Petra are thorny. *Irby and Mangles*, p. 435. "The thorns," as described by Laborde, "rise to the same height with the columns, creeping and prickly plants

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Shall I not destroy the wise *men* out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? *Obad.*, ver. 8.

The cormorant [Hebrew, *kath*] shall possess it. *Isa.* xxxiv, 11.

The owl shall dwell in it. *Ibid.*

And the raven [or crow] shall dwell in it. *Ibid.*

It shall be a habitation of dragons. *Ibid.*, 13.

The satyr [or goat] shall cry to his fellow. *Ibid.*, 14.

[NINEVEH.] He will make an utter end of the place thereof. I will make thy grave; for thou art vile. *Nahum* i, 8, 14.

She is empty, and *void*, and waste. *Ibid.*, ii, 10.

Thy crowned are as the locusts, and thy captains

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hide the remains of the works of man: the thorn, or bramble, reaches the top of the monuments, grows on the cornices, and conceals the base of the columns."

Even the clearing away of rubbish merely "to allow the water to flow" into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, is spoken of by Burckhardt, "as an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs." *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 366.

The bird Katta is met with in immense numbers; they fly in such large flocks that the Arab boys often kill two or three of them at a time, merely by throwing a stick among them. *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 406.

Eagles, hawks, and *owls* were soaring above our heads in considerable numbers, seemingly annoyed at any one approaching their lonely habitation. *Irby and Mangles's Travels*, p. 415.

The fields of Tafyle, in the immediate vicinity of Edom, are frequented by an immense number of crows. *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 405.

The Arabs in general avoid them (the ruins in Edom) on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 344.

Large herds of mountain goats are met with. *Burckhardt's Travels*, p. 405.

The *mounds* "show neither bricks, stones, nor other materials of building, but are in many places overgrown with grass." *Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia*, vol. ii, p. 49, etc.

Eastward of the Tigris, at the end of the bridge of Mosul, the great *Nineveh* had formerly been erected: the city, and even the ruins, had long since disappeared; the VACANT SPACE afforded a spacious field for the operation of the two armies. [Those of Rome and Persia.] *Gibbon's Rome*, vol. viii, pp. 250, 251.

Where are those ramparts of *Nineveh*? *Volney's Ruins*, chap. ii.

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as the great grasshoppers . . . and the place is not known where they were. *Ibid.*, iii, 17.

The Lord hath given a commandment concerning thee, that no more of thy name be sown. *Ibid.*, i, 14.

[TYRE.] Tyre shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. *Ezek.* xxvi, 4, 5.

[EGYPT.] I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. *Ibid.*, xxx, 12.

They shall be a base kingdom . . . the basest of the kingdoms. *Ibid.*, xxix, 14, 15.

[THE ARABS.] He [Ishmael] will be a wild man; his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him. *Gen.* xvi, 12.

[CHALDEA or BABYLONIA.] I will punish . . . the land of the Chaldeans. *Jer.* xxv, 12. I will send unto Babylon fanners, that shall fan her, and shall empty her land. *Jer.* li, 2.

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The name of Nineveh seems to be threatened with the same oblivion that has overtaken its greatness. *Ibid.*, chap. iv.

Instead of that ancient commerce, so active and so extensive, Sour [Tyre] is reduced to a miserable village. They live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a trifling fishery. *Volney's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 212, 225.

Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the race of Tartars distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 74, 103.

Egypt above five hundred years has been under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. *Gibbon's Rome*, vol. vi, p. 109.

They are "armed against mankind." "A single robber, or a few associates, are branded with their genuine name; but the exploits of a numerous band [of Arabs] assume the character of a lawful and honorable war." *Ibid.*, vol. ix, p. 237.

These splendid accounts of the Babylonian lands yielding crops of grain two or three hundred fold, compared with the modern face of the country, afford a remarkable proof of the singular desolation to which it has been subjected. *Transactions of the Literary Society, Bombay*, vol. i, p. 123. It is an "immeasurable wild, bounded only by the desert," "a barren waste," "a bare desert," "a barren country," etc. *Capt. Mignan's Travels*, p. 31; *Major Keppel's Narrative*, vol. i, p. 260; *Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia*, vol. ii, p. 242.

PROPHECY.

A drought is upon her waters, and they shall be dried up. *Jer.* i, 38. Behold, the hindermost of the nations *shall be* a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. *Jer.* i, 12.

Her cities are a desolation. *Jer.* li, 43.

BABYLON* shall become heaps. *Jer.* li, 37.

Cast her up as heaps. *Jer.* i, 26.

And destroy her utterly. *Ibid.*

Let nothing of her be left. *Ibid.*

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The canals at present can only be traced by their decayed banks. *Bombay Literary Trans.*, p. 138. They are now dry and neglected. *Rich's Memoirs*, p. 4. The absence of all cultivation, the *sterile, arid*, and wild character of the scene, formed a contrast to the rich accounts delineated in Scripture. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 5.

The ancient cities of Chaldea "no longer exist." *Major Rennell's Geography of Herodotus*, p. 335. The more modern cities, which flourished under the empire of the Caliphs, "are all in ruins." *Mignan's Travels*, App. The whole country is strewed over with the debris of Grecian, Roman, and Arabian towns, confounded in the same mass of rubbish. *Malte-Brun's Geography*, vol. ii, p. 119.

Babylon has become "a vast succession of mounds," "a great mass of ruined heaps," "uneven heaps of various sizes. The larger ruins have the appearance of irregular and misshapen hills, the lesser form a succession of little hillocks." *Keppel, Porter, Rich, Mignan, Buckingham*, etc.

In seeking for bricks the workmen pierce into the mound in every direction, hollowing out deep ravines and pits, and *throwing up* the rubbish in *heaps* on the surface. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 22.

From the excavations in every possible shape and direction, the regular lines of the original ruins have been so broken that nothing but confusion is seen to exist. *Sir E. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 338.

Vast heaps constitute *all that now remains* of ancient Babylon. *Keppel's Narrative*, vol. i, p. 196. Some of the heaps are "completely exhausted of all building materials; and nothing is now left but heaps of earth and fragments of brick." *Mignan's Travels*, pp. 199, 200. *Porter's Travels*, 356, 338, etc.

*The prophetic history of the decline and fall of Babylon, from its first capture to its present desolation, is so copious as to occupy ninety pages of the Evidence of Prophecy, in illustration of as many predictions.

PROPHECY.

I will make it pools of water. *Isa.* xiv, 23.

Sit in the dust . . . sit on the ground . . . O daughter of the Chaldeans. *Isa.* xlvii, 1.

Thy nakedness shall be uncovered. *Isa.* xlvii, 3.

Sit thou silent, and get thee into darkness. *Isa.* xlvii, 5.

Because of the wrath of the Lord it shall not be inhabited, but it shall be wholly desolate. *Jer.* i, 13.

It shall never be inhabited. *Isa.* xliii, 20.

Neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation. *Ibid.*

Neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there. *Ibid.*

Neither shall the shep-

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The ground is sometimes covered with pools of water in the hollows. The plain is covered at intervals with small pools of water. *Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia*, vol. ii, p. 296. *Porter, Keppel*, etc.

The whole face of the country is covered with vestiges of buildings. *Rich*, p. 2.

"I am perfectly incapable of conveying an adequate idea," says Captain Mignan, "of the dreary, lonely nakedness that appeared before me." *Mignan's Travels*, p. 116.

A silent and sublime solitude—a silence profound as the grave. *Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 294, 407.

Babylon . . . "the tenantless and desolate metropolis." *Mignan's Travels*, p. 234. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. *Keppel's Narrative*, p. 196.

Ruins composed like those of Babylon, of heaps of rubbish impregnated with nitre, cannot be cultivated. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 16. The decomposing materials of a Babylonian structure doom the earth on which they perish to a lasting sterility. *Sir R. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 391.

In the sixteenth century "there was not a house to be seen" at Babylon. *Ray's Collection of Travels*, *Rawolff*, p. 174. In the nineteenth it is still "desolate and tenantless." *Mignan*, p. 234.

"I saw the sun sink behind the Mujelibah," says Captain Mignan, "and obeyed with infinite regret the summons of my guides," *Arabs* completely armed. He "could not persuade them to remain longer, from the apprehension of evil spirits. It is impossible to eradicate this idea from the minds of these people." *Travels*, pp. 2, 168, 201, 235. *Buckingham*, etc. All the people of the country assert that it is

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herds make their fold there. *Ibid.*

But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there. *Ibid.* xiii, 21.

And their houses shall be full of doleful creatures. *Ibid.*

And owls shall dwell there. *Ibid.*

And satyrs [goats] shall dance there. *Ibid.*

And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses [or palaces]. *Ibid.* xiii, 22.

And dragons in their pleasant palaces. *Ibid.*

Cut off the sower from Babylon, and him that handleth the sickle in the time of harvest. *Jer.* l, 16.

The sea is come up upon Babylon: she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof. *Jer.* li, 42.

Neither doth any son

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extremely dangerous to approach this mound after night-fall, on account of the multitude of evil spirits by which it is haunted. *Rich*, p. 27. By this belief they are prevented from there pitching a tent by night, or making a fold.

There are dens of wild beasts in various parts. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 30. *Porter*, *Keppel*, *Buckingham*, etc.

These dens or caverns "are the retreat of jackals, hyenas, and other noxious animals." "The 'strong ordure,' or 'loathsome smell,' which issues from most of them, is sufficient warning not to proceed into the den." *Keppel's Narrative*, pp. 179, 180. *Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 342, etc.

"In most of the cavities are numbers of bats and owls." "Thousands of bats and owls have filled many of these cavities." *Rich's Memoir*, p. 30. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 167.

"The caves" and "their entrances are strewn with bones of sheep and goats." *Mignan*, p. 167. *Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 342.

"We had no doubt," says Major Keppel, "as to the savage nature of the inhabitants. Wild beasts are numerous at the Mujilibie"—one of the largest of the heaps, supposed to have been the palace.

Venomous reptiles are very numerous throughout the ruins. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 168.

On this part of the plain, both where traces of buildings were left and where none had stood, all seemed equally naked of vegetation. *Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 302.

The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. *Keppel's Narrative*, p. 196.

For the space of two months throughout the year, the ruins of Babylon are inundated by the annual overflowing of the Euphrates,

So as to render many parts of them inacces-

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of man pass thereby. *Jer.* li, 43.

A desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness. *Jer.* li, 43.

It shall be *wholly* desolate. *Jer.* i, 13.

Bel [the temple of Belus] boweth down. *Isa.* xlv, 1.

Bel is confounded. *Jer.* i, 2.

I...will make thee a burnt mountain. *Jer.* li, 25.

I will stretch out mine hand upon thee, and roll thee down from the rocks. *Jer.* li, 25.

They shall not take of

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sible, by converting the valleys into morasses. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 13. *Sir R. K. Porter, Buckingham*, etc.

After the subsiding of the waters, even the low heaps become again "sun-burnt ruins," and the site of Babylon, like that of the other cities of Chaldea, is "a dry waste," "a parched and burning plain." *Buckingham*, vol. ii, pp. 302, 305; *Keppel's Narrative*, i, p. 196.

A more *complete* picture of desolation could not well be imagined. *Keppel's Narrative*, p. 196. *Sir R. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 392.

The loftiest temple ever built is nothing now but the highest *heap* in Babylon, bowed down to little more than the third part of its original height. "The whole *mound* is a ruin." *Rich's Memoir*, p. 37.

The *whole* summit and sides of this mountainous ruin are furrowed by the weather and by human violence into deep hollows and channels. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 210. *Porter, Rich*, etc.

The Birse Nimrod presents the appearance of a circular hill. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 35. It is strewn over with petrified and vitrified substances. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 210. On the summit are immense fragments of brick-work, of no determinate figure, tumbled together (*confounded*) and converted into solid vitrified masses. *Rich's Memoir*, p. 36. The change exhibited on which is only accountable from their having been exposed to the fiercest fire, or rather, scathed by lightning. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 208. They are "completely molten," and "ring like glass." *Keppel*, p. 194. *Sir R. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, pp. 308, 326.

Throughout the whole of these awful testimonies of the fire (whatever fire it was), which doubtless *hurled them from their original elevation*, the regular lines of cement are visible. *Sir R. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 312.

"The vitrified masses" are unfit for either

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thee a stone for a corner, nor a stone for foundations; but thou shalt be desolate forever. *Jer.* li, 26.

Merodach [the palace] is broken in pieces. *Jer.* i, 2.

Thou shalt be brought down . . . to the sides of the pit. *Isa.* xiv, 15.

Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols. *Isa.* xiv, 11.

The worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee. *Isa.* xiv, 11.

Thou art cast out of thy grave like an abominable branch. *Isa.* xiv, 19.

Her idols are confounded, her images are broken in pieces. *Jer.* i, 2.

All the graven images of her gods he hath broken unto the ground. *Isa.* xxi, 9.

The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken. *Jer.* li, 58.

Every one that goeth

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use; and the bricks, in other parts of the ruinous heap, "cannot be detached whole." It cannot, therefore, be rebuilt. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 206; *Porter, Rich, Buckingham*, etc.

The Mujelibie is a mass of confusion, none of its members being distinguishable. *Buckingham's Travels*, vol. ii, p. 273. On the south-east it is cloven into a deep furrow from top to bottom. *Mignan*, p. 166.

"The sides of the ruin exhibit hollows worn partly by the weather," etc. "All the sides are worn into furrows." *Mignan's Travels*, p. 167; *Rich's Memoir*, p. 29.

This very pile was once the seat of luxury and vice; now abandoned to decay, etc. *Mignan's Travels*, p. 172.

The mound was full of large holes strewed with the carcasses and skeletons of animals recently killed. *Keppel's Narrative*, p. 179. In the warm climate of Chaldea, wherever these are strewed, worms cannot be wanting.

After being brought down to the grave, it is cast out of it again, for "many of the excavations have been dug by the rapacity of the Turks tearing up its bowels in search of hidden treasures." *Sir R. K. Porter's Travels*, vol. ii, 342.

"Engraved marbles, idols of clay;" "small figures of brass and copper;" "bronze figures of men and animals are found among the ruins." *Rennell's Geography of Herodotus*, p. 368; *Rich, Porter, Mignan*.

"Where are the walls of Babylon?" asks Volney, *Ruins*, chap. ii. "In common with other travelers," says Major Keppel, "we totally failed in discovering any trace of the city walls." *Keppel's Narrative*, vol. i, p. 175; *Captain Frederick on the Ruins of Babylon*, vol. i, pp. 130, 131; *Rich's Memoirs*, pp. 43, 44.

"I cannot portray," says Captain Mignan,

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by Babylon shall be astonished. *Jer.* i, 13. Babylon shall become . . . an astonishment. *Ibid.* li, 37.

The Lord . . . will do his pleasure on Babylon. *Isa.* xlviii, 14. Every purpose of the Lord shall be performed against Babylon. *Jer.* li, 29. I will bring upon that land all my words which I have pronounced against it, even all that is written in this book. *Jer.* xxv, 13.

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"the overpowering sensation of reverential awe that possessed my mind while contemplating the extent and magnitude of ruin and desolation on every side." *Mignan's Travels*, p. 117; *Sir R. K. Porter, Rich*, etc.

It was *impossible* to behold the scene and not to be reminded how *exactly* the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present: that she should never be inhabited; that the Arabian should not pitch his tent there; that she should become heaps; that her cities should be a desolation, a dry land and a wilderness. *Keppel's Narrative*, p. 197; *Rich, Porter, Mignan, Buckingham*, etc.

"A single fact, as Fox has said, is worth a thousand arguments; and to set about a proof of the inspiration of the Jewish prophets, after having placed these predictions and facts before the reader, would be an impeachment of his understanding, as incapable of comprehending the plainest truth; and of his heart, as seared and hardened in unbelief, beyond the possibility of conviction. Adopting again, in the conclusion as at the commencement, the definition given by an enemy, we would say, 'if by a prophet we are to suppose a man to whom the Almighty communicated some event that would take place in future, either there were such men or there were not.' And, if any truth be so clear that it cannot be misunderstood, and so evident that it cannot be denied, it is a truth that there were such men, and that manifold events which may now be known of all men were communicated to them, which God alone could have revealed. The prophecies of Scripture bear no similitude whatever to any random conjectures of future events, such as short-sighted mortals could form. They are most distinct and definite; and the events which they marked,

with all the accuracy which the closest inspection could enable an eye-witness to portray, are the most marvelous that have ever been recorded in the history of the world. They have proved independent of a thousand contingencies, any one of which might, humanly speaking, have rendered each of them abortive; and their fulfillment is the result of a countless number and variety of causes which, in a long succession of ages, have all successively conspired to further, and ultimately to perfect, the very end that was declared from the beginning.

“Men may cavil at the word of God, and deride his judgments, but from the high places of infidelity witnesses must come forth to prove that his word is true, and that his judgments are sure. The undesigned and conclusive testimony of the talented academician who, without a pilgrim’s spirit, sojourned long in the land of Palestine, is worth that of many pilgrims. The facts which he adduced and accumulated, instead of showing, as he thought, that all revelation is false, and that belief in it is the cause of desolation, give direct evidence of inspiration, and show what ruin the rejection of the everlasting covenant has wrought. And they need but to be placed, as above, side by side with the words of the prophets, in order that the author of the ‘Ruins of Cities and Revolutions of Empires’ may be set up against all men besides, who would gainsay the proved truths that the God of Israel is the Lord and that the prophets spake by inspiration of his Spirit. And the infidel chief not only contends like an indomitable hero in our cause, but thus irrefutably reasons, like a philosopher, in our behalf:

“‘How long will man importune the heavens with unjust complaint? How long with vain clamors will he accuse fate as the author of his calamities? Will he then never open his eyes to the light, and his heart to the insinuations of truth and reason? This truth every-where presents itself in radiant

brightness; and he does not see it! The voice of reason strikes his ear; and he does not hear it! Unjust man! if you can for a moment suspend the delusion which fascinates your senses—if your heart be capable of comprehending the language of argumentation—interrogate these ruins! read the lessons which they present to you! And you, sacred temples! venerable tombs! walls once glorious! the witnesses of twenty different ages, appear in the cause of nature herself! Come to the tribunal of sound understanding to bear testimony against an unjust accusation, to confound the declamations of false wisdom or hypocritical piety, and avenge the heavens and the earth of the man who calumniates them!’ ‘For myself, I swear by all laws, human and divine—by the laws of the human heart—that the hypocrite and the deceiver shall be themselves deceived; the unjust man shall perish in his rapacity, and the tyrant in his usurpation; the sun shall change its course before folly shall prevail over wisdom and science, before stupidity shall surpass prudence, in the delicate art of procuring to man his true enjoyments, and of building his happiness upon a solid foundation. Thus spoke the apparition.’*

“Believers in Jesus swear not at all. But an oath for confirmation is not needful to show—nor need a spirit be evoked to tell—that the ‘truth presents itself in radiant brightness;’ that if the voice of reason were heard, and the delusion which fascinates the senses of the skeptic were suspended for a moment, the truth would be clearly seen and infallibly believed; ‘the declamations of a false philosophy would be confounded,’ and the heavens and the earth, and the word of Him that made them, ‘be avenged of the man who calumniates them;’ that the deceiver is himself deceived; and that of Volney, and of each of his compeers, it may be said, ‘Thou art the man;’

* Volney’s “Ruins,” chap. iii, English translation. The original, which is still better, is inserted in Appendix No. I.

and that 'the sun shall change its course before folly shall prevail over wisdom;' before infidelity shall triumph over faith; before the happiness of man shall be built on any other foundation than that which the Lord hath laid; and before any or all the gates of hell shall prevail against the word of the living God, or that word return unto him void, or fail to fulfill the purpose for which he sent it.

"What, then, but lighter than air are all the vaporizing declamations of ungodly men against the inspiration of the Jewish prophets, when weighed in the balance of right reason, against facts so luminous and argumentation so convincing? And how clearly, so that the dimmest eye may see—how loudly, so that the dullest ear may hear—do all these events show and proclaim that they were 'communicated by the Almighty;' and that the seers of Israel were the prophets of the Lord! And when a man like Paine, or Volney, or Voltaire is heard to declaim against the inspiration of the prophets, and to stigmatize them as impostors and liars, may not every man who has eyes to see clearly discern that he is one of those false teachers and presumptuous and self-willed scoffers who, as also foretold in Scripture, were to arise in the last days, and have now arisen, who speak evil of the things that they understand not; who speak great swelling words of vanity to allure others, promising them liberty, while they themselves are the children of corruption, and foaming out their own shame? And may we not look on such a man as furnishing, by his words and the ignorance they display—by his acts and the impiety they show forth—as plain a proof, even in his derision against it, of the inspiration he denies as if we were to stand on any of the ruins of Babylon and hear the cry of a wild beast, the hissing of a serpent, or the hooting of an owl, or as if we saw in Petra the vultures gathered every one with its mate, and heard the screech-owl scream in the midst of the city devoted to perpet-

ual desolation? Without convicting himself of a love of darkness, akin to that of the bird of night, no man can 'shut his eyes against the light, or his ear against the voice of reason.'

"If asked a reason of our faith in the inspiration of the prophets, an answer may be given to every question, and an event may be shown for every prediction. Invoking ruined cities by their names, Volney exclaims, 'O names forever glorious! celebrated fields! famous countries! how replete is your aspect with sublime instruction! How many profound truths are written on the surface of this earth! Ye places that have witnessed the life of man in so many different ages, unveil the causes of his misfortunes, teach him true wisdom, and let the experience of past ages become a mirror of instruction, and a germ of happiness to present and future generations!'^{*} Let skeptics, then, at the bidding of their master, and let all practical as well as professed unbelievers, if their hearts be capable of comprehending the language of argumentation or the evidence of facts, interrogate these ruins. And without consulting a seducing spirit let them discern the sublime instruction with which their aspect is replete; let the experience of past ages and the sight of existing facts be a mirror of instruction in which to view the radiant brightness of prophetic inspiration; and, no longer slow of heart to believe what Moses and the prophets have spoken, their faith shall be built on 'a solid foundation.'

"Light from heaven rests on every ruin; and they all beam with brighter glories and are full of richer treasures than ever. Broken wreaths of garlands wrought in marble, shattered symbols of imperial power itself gone forever, and fractured fragments of senseless gods, all graven by the hands of slaves—columns, once the ornament of cities, now memorials of the places where they stood—palaces converted into heaps of dust, and

^{*} Volney's "Ruins."

walls long the wonder of the world, now searched for in vain—set forth conspicuously to view the withering and blasting blight that has passed on human glory. But He who makes the lichen to grow upon the Iceland rocks, and concentrates on them the substance of the richest nourishment, has scattered his word over the wide-spread field of ruins, as good seed covering a fertile plain; and that word needs to be but rationally and rightly apprehended in ‘every heart capable of comprehending the language of argumentation,’ to form, in a manner no skeptic could wot of, ‘a germ of happiness to present and future generations.’

“‘The profound truths’ which these ruins declare are so manifest that they are ‘written on the surface of the earth.’ Their testimony is so ample that their very ‘aspect is replete with divine instruction;’ and the evidence they supply is so luminous and convincing that each fact or feature answers to the written word, as in a ‘mirror’ face answers to face. And when interrogated touching the causes of man’s misfortunes, and charged to teach them true wisdom, they all—like men risen from the dead, appealing to a testimony as high as their own—exclaim with one voice, ‘Ye have Moses and the prophets, hear them.’ They foretold the effect which you see; and they too unveiled the cause. From them may we learn that the judgments which a mysterious God has exercised on us were not spoken in secret in a dark place, but are as the light that goeth forth. Ye may read them, as they are all written in his word. For no evil has come on us but what he revealed to his servants the prophets. They were set over the nations and kingdoms to root out and to pull down, and to destroy and to throw down—as ye behold us now—and as shall yet be seen, to build and to plant.* By his prophets the Lord has hewn us down. His judgments were uttered against us as touching

* Jer. i, 10.

our wickedness. His word has been our burden, and has brought us to the dust: but iniquity has been our ruin, and has made us what we are. The children of Israel forsook the covenant of the Lord God of their fathers; and the anger of the Lord was kindled against this land to bring upon it all the curses that are written in his Book.* And because of the iniquity of them that dwell therein, the land still mourneth. For three transgressions of Judah and for four—for three transgressions of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Tyrus, Gaza, etc., and for four—the Lord did not take away the punishment thereof.† They all multiplied their words and blasphemies and transgressions against the Lord; and his word went forth against them. In their pride they exalted themselves to heaven; and they have been brought down to hell. Babylon the great, proud as Lucifer the son of the morning, has been cut down to the ground, because it was full of iniquity and strove against the Lord. The Lord hath broken the staff of the wicked; and hath rendered unto them the evil they had done. True and faithful are his judgments. And were there not a veil upon the heart in reading Moses and the prophets, the causes of man's misfortunes would lie unveiled and open to his view. Do men consult us that they may learn true wisdom? we can teach it by interrogating them. Is not He, whose word hath brought us to the dust, the Ruler among the nations? Who hath declared this from ancient time, and told it from that time? is not he the Lord, the Holy One of Israel? Who hath hardened himself against him and prospered? Or who can resist his power, or turn back his word, or abide the destruction that cometh from the Almighty? Have not the things which the prophets said come to pass? And did they not speak as the Lord gave them utterance? Has not, as you see, every desolation a token to show—and has not, as you hear, every ruin a tongue to tell in

* Deut. xxix, 25, 27.

† Amos i, ii.

‘reason’s ear,’ that the word of prophecy is sure? And do you not know that he who declared it is the Lord, and that there is no God else besides him? ‘Names forever glorious!’ do you call us? And do you not see that righteousness and glory belong unto the Lord, but unto us confusion and shame? Come and see how iniquity has been our burden; and how cities and countries have been brought at last to do homage to the glory of the Lord, and to magnify the word which the kingdoms and nations would not hear. Without a man in our cities to answer, may we not tell and ‘teach’ you that the fear of the Lord is ‘the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding;’ that sinners shall be consumed out of the earth, and the wicked be no more; and that, if the fear of the Lord be not there, the proudest of the cities of the nations shall become as one of us? Turn ye, turn ye! why will ye die? If you hear not Moses and the prophets, neither would ye be persuaded though one rose from the dead! According to their word, we wait the time when God shall turn away iniquity from Jacob; when, as judgment now coincides with judgment, blessing shall harmonize with blessing; when he that scattered Israel shall have gathered him, and his light shall break forth as the morning, and they that be of him shall build the old wastes and raise up the desolations of many generations, and he shall be called The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.* Then a new song shall be put into our mouths. The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. They shall see the glory and the excellency of the Lord.’

“The first portion of this demonstration of the truth of Christianity is that of the inspiration of the Jewish prophets. And while light thus breaks forth on the dark history of man,

* Isa. lviii, 8, 12.

their words shining over it as the stars fixed in the firmament of heaven shine into the darkness of night, is it not wise—as an apostle declares it to be well—‘to take heed to the more sure word of prophecy’ as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts? knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation—that the event, not the fancy of any man, must interpret it. ‘For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.’ *

“Keeping in view the marshaled host of irrefutable facts to which the word of God by the prophets has given irresistible power, and which stand ever ready at a call, we have only—with the same weapon from the armory of heaven, the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God—to pass from the tent of one enemy to the tower of another, in order to turn it too into a stronghold of our faith.”

To any who may desire to read a more extended account of these marvelous predictions and their fulfillment, we would name, as easily accessible in any respectable library or book-store and as deserving a reading: “Mellvaine’s Lectures,” “Keith on the Prophecies,” “Newton on the Prophecies,” “Prideaux’s Connections,” “Faber’s Dissertations,” “Wilson’s Evidences.”

* 2 Peter i, 19–21.

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